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MITHRIDATES

King of Pontus,

A

TRAGEDY:

Acted at the

Theatre Royal,

By their Majestie's Servants.

Written by NAT. LEE. *✓*

*Hi motus animorum atque hæc certamina tanta,
Pulveris exigui jactu compressa quiescent.*

Virgil. Georg. l. 4.

Licensed *March 28 1678.*

ROGER L'ESTRANGE.

L O N D O N :

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street in Covent-Garden, near the Piazza's 1678.*



By the Hon. Secy. of the Admiralty

ADMIRALTY, WHITE HALL, LONDON

NOV 18 1898



To the Right Honourable
CHARLES,
Earl of *DORSET & MIDDLESEX,*
One of the Gentlemen of His
MAJESTIES
BED-CHAMBER, &c.

My Lord,

When I call to mind what I have observ'd of
your Wit and Judgment, the truest and
most impartial I ever knew, my thoughts
of writing after my loose manner to your
Lordship are a little dash'd, and the meanest of 'em has
the sense to tell me, I ought to be as curious and correct
in a Dedication to one Man, as in that of a Play to a
whole Nation. There is no doubt a Transport in ev'ry
Poet who writes an Epistle, but for the most part they are
A 2 dazl'd

The Dedication.

dazl'd with the Eminence of their Patrons, and at best we can but call it an Awful Delight. But I profess, what those to whom I am disagreeable, will impute to want of Modesty, I make this Tragedy an Off'ring to your Lordship with as much freedom, pleasure, and perfect satisfaction, as ever *Mitbridates* receiv'd when he found himself in the Arms of his Fairest Mistress. You stand Equal with the Greatest, and your Quality shou'd cause a Dread in the hardiest Writers: But on the other hand, there is such an innate sweetness of temper, such a most remarkable goodness in all your Actions, a Character peculiar to you more than any man alive, that the meanest, modestest of Poets may approach you. Methinks *I* feel a sort of chearful springing Pride, when *I* see your Lordship stand forth to this last Birth, which sure if *I* had ever any lovely, is much the Fairest Child. Happy Fortune must attend it, and Heav'n and Earth be pleas'd where you approve. *I* accost you, my Lord, without Formality, and wou'd appear before the severest Judge in the plainest Garb, or rather nakedness of thought; as some, and those not of the least courage, go to the most bloody Test of valour, all unarm'd. An over-care in things of this nature does often turn to affectation, and what was meant a Guard, proves an Encumbrance: We may stiff'n our imaginations with making 'em too quaint; and polish, till we are nothing else but gloss: *I* am infinitely pleas'd, to be as plain as *I* can, nor care *I* how it pleases others, tho *I* am sure it does, that *I* have laid this Play at your Lordships feet. All my Acquaintance that with me well applaud my choice;
for

The Dedication.

for I may safely affirm, by the judgment of the Town, without being censur'd for a Dawber; there's not a man whom all men love but you; you are beheld in all the Company you Honour, as if you were the Genius of that Prince who was call'd the *Delight of Mankind*, and are ador'd with all the love and admiration which e're the Noble *Titus* found in *Rome*. *Ziphares* is an imperfect Figure of your self; I cast him in your Mould, and fashion'd him as well as my weak Fancy cou'd, to that Perfection the Court so universally allows you: When I design'd to draw him for the Ladies, endearing, soft, and passionately loving, I thought on you, and found the way to Charm 'em. And 'tis most certain, he who obliges these Fair Criticks to be of his Party, has the surest Gains that ever Poet plaid: I cannot but own the Honours they have done me, and entreat your Lordship to secure 'em my Friends. There is yet a greater Honour I wou'd beg of your Lordship, and so important, I cannot name it without apprehension: *Mithridates* being in your hands, desires to be laid at the Feet of the Queen. Her Majesty, who is the Sublimest Goodness, and most merciful Vertue that ever blest a Land, has been pleas'd to grace him with her Presence, and promis'd [it] again with such particular praises, the effects of her pure Bounty, that shou'd he not express his Gratitude almost to adoration, he wou'd deserve another Fate, when he is next represented, than what he has hitherto receiv'd.

I have endeavour'd in this Tragedy to mix *Shakespear* with *Fletcher*; the thoughts of the former, for Majesty and true *Roman* Greatness, and the softness and passionate expres-

The Dedication.

expressions of the latter, which makes up half the Beauties, are never to be match'd: How have I then endeavour'd to be like 'em? O faint Resemblance! As *Pizarro* says of the *Mexicans*,

— *And those who now remain,
Appear but as the Shadows of the Slain.*

It may be objected, *I broke the Scenes* in the beginning of the Third and Fifth Acts; those who are so nicely curious to be offended at this oversight, may for their satisfaction leave 'em out; and the Play will be entire. *I* apply my self to your Lordship, as *Montaign* does to his Reader in his Chapter of Books; *I will*, says he, *love the Man that shall trace me!* For *I* have many times found fault with an Expression, as *I* pretended was in a Play of my own, and had it dam'd by no indifferent Criticks, tho' the immortal *Shakespear* will not blush to own it. But *I* am confident your Lordship will find me out, and *I* desire to be so found a Refiner on those admirable Writers; the Ground is theirs, and all that serves to make a rich Embroidery! *I* hope the World will do me the Justice to think, *I* have disguiz'd it into another fashion more suitable to the Age we live in; for if *I* cou'd persuade my self there were nothing of mine extraordinary in the Play; *I* wou'd not have dedicated it to the best of Men.

— *Mediocribus esse Poetis,
Non dii non homines non concessere columnæ.*

Here

The Dedication.

Here you must give me leave to tell the World, that Pillars and Altars too ought to be rais'd to your Lordship, if the greatest Genius of Poetry deserves em: Your thoughts in some select Poems I have seen, are rich and new, as the Golden *American World*, your Expressions justly strong, your words Emphatical, as chosen men for an Enterprize of Glory: As it was observed of the Army of *Alexander the Great*, every Souldier look'd like a Commander, and every Commander like an *Alexander*; so in your admirable Draughts, all things are so excellent, we know not where to fix; we stand on Hills of so vast a breadth, that the Valleys are not seen; it looks like Heaven all about us, and Fancy is lost in the infinite Beauty of the Prospect: Your Writing dazzles with clearness and Majesty; you draw, like *Holbin*, without Shadows.

—*Qui Genus humanum ingenio superavit & omnes
Præstrinxit fellas, exortus uti Ætherius Sol.*

Your Images are so great, we look like Dwarfs beneath you; and then so lively represented, tho of dead, low Objects, animated by your Genius,

—*Credas simulacra moveri
Ferreæ, cognatoque viros spirare metallo.*

What e're you stamp is Royal, other Pretenders to *Satyr* but file and wash, they live by the Clippings of your Wit, and dip their Silver in your Bath, to make it pass

The Dedication.

pass for Gold. Self-preservation bids me say no more of
your Lordships Poetry, lest I dam my own, who aim at
nothing so much as the Honour of being thought by your
Lordship,

My Lord,

Your most Humble, Obedient,

and Devoted Servant,

NAT. LEE.

—Our Great human infirmity (superior to ours)
Preferring false, extraneous pleasures.

Your images are so great, we look like Dwarfs, but
mean you; and then so lively represented, the of dead,
for Objects, as moved by your Great

—Credula, a black mirror

Perfected, cognate with spirits within

What ere you stamp is Royal, other Pretenders to
Satyr but file and wayward live by the Clipping, so
your Wit and dip their Silver in your Bath, to make it
pass

PROLOGUE.

Not careful Leaders, when the Trumpets call
Their Martial Squadrons on, to stand or fall,
Toss'd with more doubts, than careful Poets are
When vent'rous Wit for Sally does prepare;
When Humming Voices bid the Play begin,
And the last flourish calls the Prologue in.
Here, you, like dreadful warriors, judging sit;
And, in full Council, try all Writers Wit.
To some, for Sense Renown'd, our Authors bow;
And what you Doom, for a just Fate allow:
But sure far less such Judges Poets dread,
Than those Raw Blades who will not let 'em Plead,
But, e're they can be heard, try, shoot 'em dead.
These Pyrats, that both Arms and wits debase;
Who Fields and Poems, with their Spleen, disgrace;
Poets and Warriors both shou'd have in Chase:
These Libellers who noblest Fights despise,
Yet, when a Pan-but flashes, shut their Eyes.
Who write Lampoons, and vilely get a Name
By others Infamy; and live on shame;
Fifes, whifflers, of the justest Sense, not fit
To be the Powder-Monkeys of true Wit:
Mimics, like Apes, what's ill, from heads they drain,
And live upon the Vermin of a brain.
Neglecting these, and trusting to your aid,
To Beauty our last Vows, like yours, are made:
Beauty, which still adorns the op'ning List,
Which Cæsar's Heart vouchsafes not to resist:
To that alone devoted is this day;
For, by the Poet, I was bid to say,
In the first draught, 'twas meant the Ladies Play.

Persons Represented ;

By

Mithridates, King of *Pontus*.
Ziphares, } his Sons. }
Pharnaces, }
Archelaus, General under *Ziphares*.
Pelopidas, } two Courtiers. }
Andravar, }
Aquilius, a Roman Captive.
 Another Roman Officer.
Ismenes, Page to *Ziphares*.
Monima, Contracted to *Mithridates*.
Semandra, Daughter to *Archelaus*.
 Priests, and } Mutes.
 Attendants, }

Mr. *Mobun*.
 M. *Hart*.
 M. *Goodman*.
 M. *Griffin*.
 M. *Wintersbul*.
 M. *Powell*.
 M. *Clark*.
 M. *Wiltshire*.
 Mrs. *Corbett*.
 Mrs. *Bontel*.

Scene Synope.

MITHRIDATES, King of Pontus.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The outer-part of the Temple of the Sun.

A noise of Musick and tuning Voices is heard.

Enter Pharnaces, Pelopidas.

Phar. **T**O Night, to Night, this fatal Moment, now
Our dreadful Father's Nuptials are preparing,
And I must lose bright *Monima* for ever.
Ambition too is barr'd, Scepters and Crowns,
And all the golden Quarries now are lost.
Zphares, O *Zphares*! happy Brother,
Thou hast dislodg'd me by thy late Exploits,
And now usurp'd my Father's Brest alone.
Curs'd be the Pow'r that bless'd thee on thy way
To overthrow *Triarius*; curs'd the Stars
That glitter'd round thy Head, when by thy Arm
So many Tribunes and Centurions fell,
As made *Rome* groan, and broke *Lucullus* heart.

Pelop. Hear me, my Lord.——

Phar. This Morning, on a Mountain
Above the Clouds, his Triumph was per form'd
And I assisted at the Sacrifice.
Why gave I not this Body to the Flames,
To be devour'd among the tortur'd Slaves,
Rather than liv'd to see his Conquest Crown'd?

MITHRIDATES,

I saw it ; O, *Pelopidas*, these Eyes
Saw *Mithridates*, with a Torch, give Fire
To the vast Pile, which like a Pyramid
Stood high upon the Hill, as that on Earth.

Pelop. Will you but give me leave ?

Phar. I saw the blaze

Of his immortal Honour, heard the shout
Of all the Court, which did torment the Air
To that degree, that Birds fell round us dead ;
And that thin Region, where we scarce cou'd live
When first we did ascend, became so fat
With the rich Stream of Blood and boyling Gold
And flowing Gums, that we were forc'd remove :
Nay, I believe, the glutt'd Gods themselves
Were almost choak'd, with the prodigious Odors.

Pelop. Yet have you done ?

Phar. To the green *Neptune* then,

Because at Sea old *Archelaus* had
Been Conqueror with my Brother, in their Names
An Off'ring was decreed ; a Chariot all
With Emeralds set, and fill'd with Coral Tridents,
Was with a hundred Horses, wild as Wind,
From off the top of that most dismal place
Plung'd to the bottom of the slimy Deep.

Pelop. Let me intreat you call your Reason home,
And listen to your faithful Servant's Counsel ;
You cannot hate your Brother more to Death,
Than I his Friend, the General *Archelaus*.
Has got the start of me in the King's favour ;
And tho, without being vain, I think my self
The better Souldier, he by Policies
Has push'd me from the Dignities I bore :
The Lion's outed by the Fox. ———

Phar. But with full cry

Let us unkennel him ; rather rebel,
Than bear it thus : 'tis mine, 'tis thy concern ;
Nor let the Name of King, or Father, awe us.
A Mistress, and a Throne ! most specious Titles.
The God of Battel rages in my Breast ;
And as at *Delphos*, when the glorious Fury

King of PONTUS.

Kindles the Blood of the Prophetick Maid,
The bounded Deity does shoot her out,
Draws every Nerve thin as a Spider's Thread,
And beats the skin out like expanded Gold;
So, with the meditation of the Work
Which my Soul bears, I swell almost to bursting.

Pelop. In all the many changes of my Life
I have not known one equal yet to yours;
At other times so moderate, so true
A Sovereign o're your self, you seem'd to want
Those Passions for your Slaves who Lord it now.

Phar. I'me hush'd if thou hast ought of comfort, speak.

Pelop. This Night your Father has decreed to Marry
The Daughter of *Palemon*.

Phar. What can hinder?

Pelop. Nothing; yet mark: my Brother *Tryphon* is
High-Priest o'th' Sun, whom all the rest obey:
Him have I wrought, that when the Nuptial Rites
Begin, some strange presages shall fall out,
Disorders unexpected, to foreshow
The Gods are much offended at the Marriage.
How this may work with one of mighty Faith
In holy Fables, one of various humor,
Whom every day new Beauties set on Fire,
Be you the Judge.

Phar. Methinks it has a Face,
But yet there's wanting what I cou'd have wish'd:
Had it been *Janus*-like, back'd with another:
When *Mithridates* frighted from his Queen,
Warn'd by false Oracles, shou'd have retir'd
Perplex'd, yet struggling with the pangs of Love;
Then to have laid a Beauty to his longing,
Some fair unknown, proud of her gaudy Bloom,
T' have quench'd his thirsty wishes, that had been
A Masterpiece! But let him Marry her,
Sure Death shall wait upon his laughing *Hymen*;
And when the God has given her to his Arms,
Fate with unerring force shall part 'em ever.

Pelop. Yet raging? 'Tis as you have said, and more!
More than excelling Mischief cou'd invent,

That is not best. We have already rais'd him ;
Andravar, my Lieutenant General,
 Scorn'd by your Brother, whom he therefore hates,
 First form'd the Plot: Old *Archelaus's* Daughter,
 The fair *Semandra*, Mistress to *Ziphares*,
 Is destin'd to be made your Father's Prey.

Phar. Excellent Engine ! - now thou work'st indeed ;
 Thou hast hit the Vein, the Life-blood of his Heart :
 I cannot see ought in the extent of Art,
 Or Nature, that can mend it. O *Ziphares*,
 Still Conquer ; rise with Triumphs, high as Heav'n,
 So such a Bolt as this be sure to wait thee.

Enter Andravar.

But see the brave Lieutenant ! come to my Arms,
 And tell me, shall *Semandra* be the King's ?

Andr. I think, my Lord, that I may safely swear it.

Phar. Thy bluntness merits praise, and says, thou'rt fit
 To serve my best revenge, Love, or Ambition.

Andr. Great *Mithridates*, whom I well have study'd,
 Tho he has weather'd forty Winter Fields,
 Yet rises in his vigor, ventures more,
 Nor feels decay of strength ; none Learn'd as he
 In Nature's Garden ; whence to his Constitution
 Most excellent, he adds such helps by Art,
 That by his looks he might be thought Immortal.
 The World, too, knows he is as Amorous now
 As when the first Sighs heav'd his youthful Brest,
 And his first Tears bedew'd the Shrines of Love.

Phar. The Consequence ?

Andr. He often has been pleas'd
 To make me honour'd with his private thoughts ;
 Whereon my General and I agreed,
 Knowing your love to *Monima*,
 And hatred to your Brother, with one blow
 To drive the business that shou'd Crown your wishes.
 Therefore I daily fill'd your Father's Ears
 With praises of *Semandra*, rais'd his wonder,
 Describ'd her dress, and each particular grace ;

King of PONTUS.

5

Her Eyes, her Hands, her Lips, with all their beauties ;
And have so fir'd him, that there only wants
A view to perfect all ; and that will be
To Night.

Phar. How know'st thou that ?

Andr. I learnt it all

From a She-slave that waits upon *Semandra*,
Who told me that *Ziphares*, with consent
Of *Archelaus*, wou'd beg her of the King,
When he this Night shou'd *Monima* Espouse. [Soft Musick:
Nor doubt, but when he once has seen *Semandra*,
The Charms of his new Queen will vanish. Hark,
The sacred Musick sounds ! — The King and Queen are coming.

Enter Archilaus, Ziphares, Semandra.

See, your Brother, *Semandra* and her Father.

Phar. O my lab'ring Brest ! how hopes and fears
Toss my wrack'd Heart, like a poor Bark, about !
But soon the Calm will come, or I must perish in the Tempest.

Exeunt Phar. Pelop. and Andr.

Ziph. By Heav'n, my Love, thou dost distract my Soul ;
There's not a Tear that falls from those dear Eyes
But makes my Heart weep Blood — O my Father !
All is not well : I found her in the Morning,
Not like a Bride, with all her Maids about her,
Half-smiling, now half-serious with her thoughts,
Of what must come ; nor warm, nor bright, nor blushing ;
But, Oh the Gods ! I found her on the Floor,
In all the storm of grief, yet beautiful,
Sighing such breath of sorrow, that her Lips
Which late appear'd like buds, were now o'reblown,
Pouring forth tears at such a slavish rate,
That, were the World on Fire, they might have drown'd
The wrath of Heav'n, and quench'd the mighty ruine.

Arch. Nothing, my Lord — 'tis all but Virgin's fear :
Marriage to Maids is like a War to Men,
The Battel causes fear ; but the sweet hopes
Of winning at the last still draws 'em on.

Sem. Alas, my Lord !

Ziph. What, but alas? no more? when by the Hand
I led her to the Temple, thus she sigh'd,
And hung upon me. If thou truly lov'st me,
If I may credit my *Semandra's* tears,
Think 'em not drops of Chance like other Womens,
The Weather of their Souls, The Chrystal bubbles
Which they can make at will, Oh satisfy
The longings of my braest, and tell thy sorrows.

Sem. That I do love you, Oh all you Host of Heav'n,
Be Witnesses? that you are dear to me,
Dearer than Day to one whom sight must leave,
Dearer than Life to one that fears to dye,
O thou bright Pow'r be Judge whom we adore,
Be Witness of my Truth, be Witness of my Love!
But yet I fear ———

Ziph. That fear, give me that fear, *Semandra*,
Produce it in the ugliest form it has,
If ought that is deform'd can come from thee.

Sem. I shall, my Lord, since you are pleas'd to hear me,
Unfold my doubts, the cause of all my Tears.
First then, I must complain of my hard Stars,
That did not dart kind Lustre on my Birth,
For tho at present, while your young Blood boyls,
Your Reason cannot get the Rein of Passion,
Yet it will come, when long possession cloyes you,
Then you will think what Queens you might have had,
With Kingdoms for their Dower, perhaps you may
Prove so unkind, to tell me of it too;
Or, if you shou'd not, yet your Eyes wou'd speak ——— [*weeping.*]
Enough to break the heart of poor *Semandra*.

Ziph. Why dost thou stab me with the tenderness
Of thy false fears, and melt me into mourning?
'Tis most unseasonable on our Wedding-day
To be seen thus: I know thou canst not doubt me.
No, thou most lovely of the fairer kind,
Think not a Crown can ever change my Virtue.
Ah, who wou'd leave the warmth of this lov'd Bosome
For the cold cares which black Ambition brings?

Sem. Spight of ill-boding Dreams, unlucky Omens,
You must, you shall, you ought to be believ'd,

And, if I weep again, it is for joy
That I this Night shall be your happy Bride.

Ziph. Oh *Mithridates*, mighty as thou art,
Before whose Throne Princes stand dumb as Death,
With folded Arms, and their Eyes fix'd to Earth ;
Dishonour bring me, if I wou'd not chuse
A private Life with her whom my Soul loves,
Rather than live like thee, with all thy Titles,
The King of Kings, without her.

Arch. Pray, my Lord,
Defer till Mid-night these strong Extasies,
Fate yet may put a bar betwixt our hopes,
And then the loss wilt be more hardly born.

*The Scene draws, discovering the inner part of the Temple.
Mithridates holding Monima by the Hand ; his Queens, Concubines, Sons and Daughters attending. Three Roman Captains, L. Cassius, Q. Oppius, and Manius Aquilius bound in Gold Chains, with many other Slaves standing at distance.*

Mith. Not yet, O *Rome*, great Tyrant of the World,
Hast thou subdu'd the *Asian* Emperor.
In thy despight I hold my glory still,
Still tread upon the Necks of conquer'd Kings,
Still make thy Consuls tremble at my Name ;
And, in one mightiest Word to sum up all,
A Word which, like a Charm, might raise the Ghosts
Of *Pyrrhus*, and the experienc'd *Hannibal*
To envy, and be dazled at my deeds,
A Word, a Name, that comprehends all Honors,
All Titles, Riches, Power, all Majesty,
In spight of *Rome*, I'm *Mithridates* still.

Aquil. The Nations must confess, that *Alexander*
Cou'd not more dreadful to the *East* appear,
Than you: ev'n *Rome* wou'd buy her peace with joy,
Cou'd you at reasonable rates afford
Your Royal Friendship, tho by your command,
Most dreadful to *Italian* Memory,
In one dark Day, damn'd in the Book of Fate,

A hundred thousand murder'd *Romans* fell.

Mith. Darest thou, fomentor of these Wars, to talk?
Thou, purple Source of all these bloody streams,
Which have for more than thirty years o'reflow'd
The *Asian* Banks, and dy'd *Euphrates* red?
Darest thou, Commissioner in chief, to put
The Earth in Arms, and set the World on flame,
Once think of Peace? Now, by the Fire-rob'd God,
Thou shalt have punishment that fits thy Crimes.

Aquil. The bravest must submit when Fortune frowns.

Mith. Desire of Wealth, the Lust of shining Dirt,
And Palace Plunder, caus'd thee with Arm'd Legions
T' invade a King, whose Father was *Rome's* Friend.
But, by the asserted Justice of my Cause,
The help of Heav'n, and of my own Right-hand,
I conquer'd thee, and thou art now my Slave.
Guards, strait convey him to the Market-place,
Take off his wealthy Chains, and melt 'em down;
Then, for a terrible Example to
All sordid Wretches, Souls made up of Avarice,
Pour down his Throat the rich dissolved Mass,
And gorge his Entrails with the burning Gold.

Mon. Not, my dear Lord, upon your Nuptial Day.

Mith. On any Day, my Queen, to do a Justice
Which all the Gods, and all good Men must like.
For *Lucius Cassius*, and for *Quintus Oppius*,
A milder Destiny's in store. Away with him.
And now proceed we to the sacred Rites.

Aquil. Yet, e're you join, hear me, proud Emperour,
Hear what the Fates have put into my breast:
I see my Death, by *Roman* Arms, reveng'd;
And what *Lucullus* had so well begun,
Pompey shall end; *Pompey*, thy glory's ruine.
This hour that gives me Death, shall be the last
Of all thy quiet: swift domestick jars
Shall overtake thee; thou shalt add more blood
To that already shed from thy own Bowels:
And when at last subdu'd in all thy Wars,
Spoil'd of thy Queens, thy Sons and Daughters slain,
Thou seek'st some corner of thy conquer'd Empire

To hide thy abandon'd Head in, then the load
Of all thy woes shall come, one whom thou least
Shalt fear, long nourish'd in thy impious breast,
Shall stab thee to the heart, and end thy days.
That this, all this, and more may light upon thee,
I pray the Gods, and so the Furies seize thee.

Mith. Away, to Death with the Prophetick Fool.

[*Ex. Guards with Aquilius.*

Tryphon, begin, and let the Altar smok
With such rich Victims, to the well-pleas'd Gods,
That they may smile from Heav'n, and give us joy.

Here follows the Entertainment: after which, the King and Queen return from the Altar to sit in state. An Image of Victory descends with two Crowns in her hands; but on a sudden the Engines break, and cast the Image forward on the Stage with such violence that they dash in pieces. Mithridates starting up.

Mith. Ha! whence? how fell this out? Now, by my Arms,
Our Nuptials are not pleasing to the Gods;
'Tis for some fault of mine, O *Monima*,
That Heav'n denies thy beauties to my bosome:
Thus, when we did approach the hallow'd Vault,
A Propheying Priest, with start-up Hair,
With rolling Eyes, and Nostrils wide as Mouths,
Stopt us i'th way, and said we were no Match.
As well the noblest Salvage of the Field
Might tamely couple with a fearful Ewe,
Tygers ingender with the timorous Deer,
Wild muddy Bores defile the cleanly Ermin,
Or Vultures sort with Doves, as I with thee.
'Tis a cross thought, and much disturbs me here.

Mon. Command me dye, e're give your Majesty
Cause of the least disturbance, O, my Lord!
Think you that I wou'd lye within your Arms
To hear you sigh, and give me Tears for Love?
Or think you, 'tis to Empire I aspire?
Rather dismiss me from your Breast, the Haven
Where I had hoarded all my happiness,

And cast me out to a wide Sea of weeping.

Mith. How e're the Pow'rs above shall deal with me,
Racking my heart with what they have set down,
Thou art our Queen.

Mon. O, 'tis an empty Name,
A senseless sound, except I am your Love;
I find, I find that I am lost for ever.
I have but slept, charm'd with a golden Dream,
And now am wak'd to beggery again.
Why did you take me from my Father's Wing?
Who, tho a petty Prince, was yet a World
Of warmth to me; why did you tempt me forth
With burning Love, and the bright Comet Power?

Mith. Fright not thy tender heart with false suspicions;
I will be ever thine: But give me leave
A little to digest with serious thoughts,
The anger of the Heav'ns — *Andravar.*

Andr. My Lord?

Phar. They whisper, General.

[To Pelop.]

Ziph. coming forward. Stars, by your leave;
Ill Omens may the guilty tremble at,
Make every accident a Prodigy,
And Monsters frame where Nature never err'd,
May the fear'd Conscience start at falling Meteors,
And call the schreme of every hooting Owl,
Or croaking Raven, Fate's most dreadful Voice:
For me, I laugh at 'em; shou'd now the Heav'n
Flame with a thousand Fires, ne're seen before,
And Thunder beat the Winds from every corner,
Not for the Calm of all the Universe
Wou'd I put off my Joys a moment longer.
Stand back, my Love; and, when I call, come forth:
A minute makes us blest, or wretched ever.

[Comes to the middle of the Stage, and kneels.]

Mith. Is there in all the space of our wide Empire
Ought of that most inestimable value
To make *Ziphares* kneel?

Ziph. There is, my Lord,
Thus to adore you.

King of PONTUS.

II

Mith. O, Celestial Powers !

Mark me your Subject out for all misfortunes,
The Curses of the *Roman Manius* fall
Heavy upon me ; Fortune's giddy Wheel,
Which we have fix'd with our Majestick weight,
Turn round with me, when I deny him ought
That he can ask with Honour : Rise, my Son.

Ziph. rising. Since on the great Request which I shall make
The peace or trouble of my Life depends,
The torment or the pleasure of my Soul,
Eternal griefs, or everlasting joys,
I wou'd recall to your remembrance, Sir,
The toils and hardships which my early Valour
Has undergone, the many Fields I have fought,
And Conquer'd too ; and as of old the *Romans*
Who fought the *Consulship*, made bare their breasts,
Lac'd with long Scars, and studded o're with Thrusts,
The Noble Wardrobe of the Scarlet War ;
I wou'd, with bolder mention of my deeds,
Display my Wounds to move your Royal Favour,
And offer, to the blood which I have shed,
All my heart holds for sealing of your promise.

Mith. O, had'st thou fought so poorly as thou speak'st
Thy Actions, all the Laurels which lye green
Upon thee, strait wou'd wither, and be dust.
To mention but thy last, thy last of Wars,
Which ev'n the breath of Majesty makes vile,
So much below thy Valour is all Language——

Ziph. The glory of that Battel is your own.

Mith. To thee we owe the day, our life and Empire ;
When six Centurions bore me from my Saddle,
And laid me groveling, for the violent Horse
To tread my Soul out ; how did my brave *Ziphares*
Break through their walls of Steel, leap o're the Ramparts
Of the dead bodies that had fenc'd me in,
On his own Courser mounting me to life.
Pious even in the mouth of Slaughter, while
On foot himself, he with his Battel-axe
Bore down the Legions, drove whole Troops before him,
And brought their Eagles drooping from the Field !

Demand, I say, ask me most Royally,
I will belavish to thy vast Ambition,
And Crown thy wilhes like a giving God.

Ziph. In thankfulness I bend me to the Earth,
Once more fall prostrate to your Majesty,
And pray the Gods to give you length of days.
Come forth, come forth, my Fairest ; break, my Day ;
Appear, and Charm, dazle the whole Assembly.

[*Semandra comes forward.*]

Mith. A wonder ! Ha !

Ziph. She is, my Lord, the Boast,
The lovely Chance-work, Master-piece of Nature,
Who blush'd to see what her own hands had made ;
As if, mistaking Moulds, she unawares
Had cast *Semandra* in a Form Divine.

Sem. These praises, breath'd from any Lips but yours,
Lord of my life, and Idol of my love,
Wou'd make me sink with shame, or scorn the Flatterer ;
But as they come from you, from that lov'd Mouth,
The tender Off'rings of your fond Desires,
I take 'em all, and die upon the sound :
To the driven Air my flying Soul is fasten'd ;
Each word, each syllable you spoke is mine ;
Yes, I am fair, a Queen, a Goddess, any thing ;
That my dear Lord is pleas'd to have me be.

Mith. She talks——

Ziph. And with so good a Grace,
That nothing but her Wit can Charm beyond it.
Late in the Camp I languish'd with a Fever,
And sure had dy'd, but for this fair Physician ;
Who in the midst of all my fiery pains,
When Art was at a loss, and I lay gasping,
Wou'd quite beguile my sufferings with her Songs ;
Her welcom Pity, and her soft Endearments :
Now, laying her chaste Cheek, cold with her Tears,
To mine, she wou'd abate the raging fire ;
Now, with warm sighs kindle my fading spirits,
And when I fainted with a Kiss recal me.

Mith. By Heav'n, she weeps, and I cou'd drink the Dew.

Phar. He takes the poyson, fast as I cou'd wish.

Pelop. And Prince *Ziphares* forces her upon him.

Arch. Hold, you have gone too far ; speak to the purpose.

Ziph. Ambition therefore was not my Request ;

In *Colchis* or in *Bosphorus* to Reign :

Leave to my Brothers all your Empire ; and

To me, this only Beauty for Reward.

Mith. Reward ! Wert thou on *Mithridates* Throne,

Possess'd of all his Kingdoms, were thine eye

Like his who guides the day, and thou cou'dst call

In all thy Journeys what thou saw'st thy own ;

Her eyes wou'd match thy lustre : all thy glories

Wou'd be but shadows, when this Face appear'd.

Ziph. They wou'd, my Lord.

Mith. They wou'd, my Lord ! Yet more ;

By all my Royalties, a God might wed her,

And be a gainer by the beauteous Bride.

Ziph. Such as she is——

Mith. Not Heav'n it self can mend her.

Had I as many Tongues as I have Languages,

Skill'd in all Speeches of the babling World,

And cou'd at once speak to as many Nations,

With such a grace as might make *Athens* blush.

By *Mercury*, and by the Father of

The *Muses*, I shou'd never speak *Semandra*.

Mon. O, he is gone ! his vow'd fidelity

Is gaz'd away !

Mith. Tell me her Birth, *Ziphares* :

She must be more than Royal.

Ziph. Fate, thy worst :

Let me be dumb for ever from this moment.

Arch. In me your Majesty may please to read

Her Father : what I want in Dignity,

Be pleas'd to fill up with my Services.

Mith. Thy Daughter !

Arch. Yes, my gracious Lord, my Daughter :

Mith. O pity that so fair a Star shou'd be
The Child of Night ; that such a stream of Crystal
Shou'd have her Spring so muddy !

Thou dy'st, thou saucy old ambitious Dotard,

Who dar'st to match thy Lees of blood with ours,

And daub the Throne of the Immortal Cyrus.

Ziph. Hold, hold, most awful, give *Ziphares* death,
Impale me, burn me, bury me alive,
But do not wrong this innocent old man;
These hairs, which were made Silver in your service,
O the good Gods! whom fear cou'd never shake,
Your bitter words have caus'd to tremble: see,
With the disgrace, he weeps; his Springs of life
Which had been dry for fifty years, this last
Affront has water'd:

Oh my poor Father!

Mith. Ha! that Name again,
Thou art no more my Son. For thee, *Semandra*,
Thou shalt attend our Queen; to Court, my Fair,
Where I must learn you to forget *Ziphares*,
And match you equal to your birth.

Sem. My Lord——*Ziphares*——Father.

Mith. Look not back,
Conduct the Queen, *Pharnaces*. O, *Semandra*!
'Tis to your Tears I sacrifice my Justice;
To them, your Fathers life I'll not deny,
Who, for Ambition, did deserve to die.

Exeunt all but Ziphares and Archelaus.

Arch. Dotard! and saucy! say, the Lees of blood!
Now, by the Gods, 'tis sprightly as his own;
O, 'tis too much to bear. Forgive me, Prince;
It breaks the very neck of Loyalty:
Perhaps, he Whores my Daughter too. But first,
Rather than see him wear my glories Spoils,
Thou, my good Sword, that has so oft been drawn,
And dy'd thy self in *Roman* bowels, to
The very Guard, for this ungrateful King,
Be faithful to me, as thou still hast been,
And pierce the heart of thy dishonour'd Master.

Ziph. Oh, *Archelaus*! Oh, my kinder Father!
If you are stir'd thus at an angry word,
What shou'd I be, I who am lost indeed,
I who am stunn'd, I who sustain'd the stroke
Of all the anger of the Fates at once?

Semandra, O my Love!

Arch. Restrain your grief,
As I my rage, and let us think apace. III TO A
Tho for my Daughters Virtue I wou'd stake
My Immortal part, my Fame so dearly bought:
Yet force, which he may use, will have its way:
Consider that.

Ziph. Consider! how shou'd I
Consider, who grow mad with crouding thoughts,
Where every one endeav'ring to be foremost
Stops up the passage, and will choak my Reason?

Arch. Once more speak humbly to him,
Perhaps, 'tis but a sudden short-liv'd fit,
A gust of Passion that may soon blow over:
But if you find it rooted in his heart,
Eat your way through him, to your happiness;
Or perish, like your Brother *Anthridates*.

Ziph. By Heav'n, I think it greatest happiness
Never to have been born; and next to that,
To die: for who that wears his flesh can bear
The curle of Accidents, a Change like mine?
I who, some moments past, wou'd not have chang'd
Condition, with the blessed Gods themselves;
Now, in all probability, am lost,
And stand upon the very brink of ruine.

Arch. Your Destiny's uncertain; Fate, as yet,
Holds the Scale doubtful; let us haste to Court,
Where we shall learn which way the Ballance falls.

Ziph. Not half an hour ago, methought secure
I hug'd my self, and almost cou'd have wept
In meer compassion to th' hard-fated World,
Thinking how much my state was happier.

Arch. Yet all the while you did not spy the danger
Which crept invisible, and undermin'd you.

Ziph. Alas, I did not; without fear I stood:
Like one who, on the Beach, discries from far
A labouring Bark, with which the Billows war;
Pities its state, wilhing the Tempest gon,
But views not the near Sea come rolling on:
So did with me my unseen Fortune play,
Till the Waves came, and wash'd me quite away.

[Exeunt.]

ACT.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter Pharnaces, and Pelopidas.

Phar. I'LL hear no more ; get me a hundred Horse
 To be our Guard, I'll bear her hence to night,
 And Ravish her, by all the fire that acts
 This fearless frame, I will. Declare the difference?
 Is not the Blood of Queens and Princesses
 Like other Womens? Souls alike infus'd ;
 Their Banquets richer, and the Drinks they taste
 The very Spirits of the Purple Vine?
 Yet we must think 'em cold as candid Ice,
 Not a thought starting, free from warm desires,
 As the bleak Girl upon the Mountain's top,
 Cover'd with Snow, beat'n with constant Winds,
 That feeds on Herbs and Roots, and drinks the Dew.

Pelop. What, wou'd you have her fall like mellow Fruit
 Whom yet no Sun has shone upon, no warmth
 To ripen? 'bate a little of this fire.

Phar. *Pelopidas*, I oft have told you, that
 She knew my love, before she saw my Father ;
 For in the Plunder I first lighted on her :
 Tho afterwards he took my beauteous spoil,
 As now he does my Brother's. I alledg'd ;
 As late I led her weeping to her Chamber,
 My constant passion, and his breach of faith,
 All that a love most violent cou'd put
 Into a Lover's mouth, like mine ; but she unmov'd,
 Insensible reply'd, the King, 'twas possible,
 At last might kill her with his cruelty ;
 Yet to the utmost moment of her life
 She wou'd adore him with such spotless love,
 Such most Romantick faith, and such a deal
 Of whining grief, that in a rage I flung
 Away, and left her talking to her self.

Pelop. And do you think this haughtiness will carry't?
 He that will win a most exalted Beauty,
 Must bend his Soul low, as he bows his Body,

Watch every Glance, obey her e're she speaks,
Cast up his eyes at each affected word,
And swear—Besides her Honour, Sir, her Honour,
Obliges her to stand a while at distance.

Phar. Tis almost empty; Honour, Courtship, all
But gaudy Nonsense. O, *Pelopidas*,
Rather than buy my Pleasure with such baseness,
I'd be a Brute: Now, by my Life, methinks,
The happier Creature, cast before thy eyes;
The generous Horse, loose in a Flow'ry Lawn;
VVith choice of Pasture, and of Chrystal Brooks,
And all his chearful Mistresses about him,
The white, the brown, the black, the shining bay,
And every dappled Female of the Field;
Now, by the Gods, for ought we know, as Man
Thinks him a Beast, Man seems a Beast to him.

Pelop. Be more considerate, less rash and hot;
I have thought of an Expedient to gain her.

Phar. Thou art my better Genius, and shalt flourish,
VVhen *Archelaus*, like a blasted Tree,
Lies rotting to the ground.

Pelop. Did *Mithridates*
Know of your Love to *Monima*?

Phar. He did:
As publickly I show'd it as *Ziphares*:
Yet he, who like the *Hesperian* Dragon, thinks
The Golden Fruit of Beauty all his own,
Flew at me as a Thief, who, while he slept,
Had stoln his Prize, and made me pay it back;
Or swore my life shou'd be the fatal forfeit.

Pelop. 'Tis as I cou'd have wish'd: thus then, the King,
VVhose Heart *Semandra* kindles into Flame,
Cools every hour to his new-marry'd Bride,
And will not Bed her till the Coronation.
A' meer put-off, wading in deep disgust,
And wishing for pretence to part for ever.

Phar. VVhich he shall have; this Head of thine has thought it.

Pelop. I, and the needful *Andravar*,
VVho feels the Pulse of his Affection,
VVill swear boldly,

As Witnesses who had both seen and heard
 The jealous *Monima* inrag'd with Love,
 But more for what her vast Ambition lost,
 Strove to revive the passion that you bore her ;
 But you most generously oppos'd her Charms,
 Which with unwillingness you shall confess,
 And beg your fiery Father to forgive her.

Phar. Pithy, and short ; thou art the Soul of Counsel.

Pelop. The very breaking of the business, throws
 Her into Prison, where, while I guard the door,
 Your Highness may, with as much ease, perform
 Your pleasure, as your faithful servant thought it.

Phar. In thanks, the vilest fawning lying Slave
 Wou'd speak thee fairer than *Pharnaces* shall ;
 But let my deeds be grateful to my Souldier.

Enter Andravar.

What news, my *Andravar*?

Andr. Your Guardian-spirit
 Now lays about him, and invisibly
 Acts wonders for you, madding all the Court :
Semandra weeping, and your Father burning ;
Monima, like a Widow'd-Turtle, mourning ;
 Old *Archelaus* pushing on his Fate,
 And Amorous *Ziphares*, led by love,
 To tumble from the top of all his hopes.
 Defiance from the *Roman* Consul *Glabrio*,
 Lent, and the third *Pontick* War renew'd.
 But Love so rocks your Fathers drouzy brain,
 That all the Trumpets of the thundring Legions
 Can scarce awake him. See where he comes !

Enter Mithridates attended.

His haughty courage scarce submitting to
 The weight which presses him ; but, striking out.
Mith. She must be mine, this admirable Creature,
 Her Charms are now inevitable grown ;
 And, while I seem to fright her from my Son,

I talk, and gaze, and dote, to my undoing.
 See her no more ; lose her with weighty thoughts,
 And drown her in the Ocean of thy Power :
 In vain I strive with cares to keep her down,
 In vain does business sink her to the bottom ;
 This Bladder Love still bears her up again.

Phar. Like a caught Lyon, raging in the snare,
 He plunges in his passion, spends his force,
 And struggles with the Toil that holds him faster.

Mith. See her no more—and live ! Impossible.
 As well I might bid Meteors keep their lustre,
 When all the shining Exhalation's spent
 That fed their short-liv'd glory.

Enter Monima.

Mon. O *Mithridates* ! O my cruel Lord !
 I come with all the violence of grief,
 To take my last farewell.

Mith. What means the Queen ?

Mon. The Queen ! O mockery of State !
 Pageant of Greatness ! wondred at a while,
 But strait neglected like a common thing.
 I come, my Lord, to beg (O Heav'ns !) your leave,
 Your Royal License, to retire from Court ;
 And, since my Father by your bounty Reigns
 At *Ephesus*, I there wou'd go to mourn,
 And languish out my wretched Life's remain.

Mith. Why will you add new troubles to my Bosom,
 Already burthen'd with the Wrath of Heav'n,
 By your unnecessary grief ?

Mon. From Earth, I fear,
 And not from Heav'n, those Cloudy Cares are drawn.

Mith. No matter whence ; they're dangerous to partake :
 The tender Face of Beauty cannot bear 'em ;
 For, if from Earth they come, their Damp will stifle ;
 And, if from Heav'n, their Influence is blasting.

Mon. Were you but kind, my Lord, as once you were,
 What blasting cou'd I fear ? what dangers, dress'd
 In all the horrors of most dreadful Death ?

But you are pleas'd that I shou'd not complain.

Andr. Semandra, by your Majesty's appointment,
Attends without.

Mith. Fair *Monima*, retire :
You will oblige me by a confidence
I cannot be, but yours ; affairs of State
Now take me from you.

Mon. Say, the affairs of Love.
I wou'd, my Royal Lord, but cannot blame you ;
I feel a Spirit within me, which calls up
All that is Woman wrong'd, and bids me chide :
But you are *Mithridates*, that dear man
Whom my Soul loves ; else, were you all the Kings,
All Worlds, all Gods, I cou'd let loose upon you,
For those deep injuries which I must suffer ;
Cou'd, like the fighting Winds, disturb all Nature
With venting of my wrongs ; but I am hush'd
As a spent Wave, and all my fiery Powers
Are quench'd, when I but look upon your Eyes,
Where, like a Star in water, I appear
A pretty sight, but of no Influence,
And am at best but now a shining Sorrow. [*Exit, led by Pharnaces.*]

Mith. O Love ! if that the Face of such Affection,
Such modest Sweetness, and such humble Virtue,
As my Queen bears, fix not my wandering Heart ;
Break, break thy Bow, and burn thy useles Arrows :
By Heav'n, her kindness strikes my troubled Soul.

Enter Semandra with Andravar attending.

But see, she's lost again, *Semandra* comes,
Who dawns like blushing Noon her paler dawn,
And shows like Summer to the Infant Spring.
Semandra, what, still weeping ? will not all
The Wealth which the Sun sees throughout the East
Dry up your Tears ? methinks, an Empire might
Suffice for any loss. I give you all my Power ;
And, with it, such a heart, as nought but Love
Cou'd bow : I throw it bleeding at your Feet.
Behold, behold, *Semandra*, while I blush,

King of PONTUS.

21

The great effects of your Commanding Beauty.

Sem. Were you yet greater than you are, which scarce
The Gods can make you ; tho no bounds but Heav'n
Did limit your large Sway ; tho in your person all
The Graces met that ever Man adorn'd,
The Blush of Rising Youth, the Conquering Eyes,
The Noble Smiles, and those most passionate Beauties,
Which drew my Heart to Idolize your Son ;
I cou'd not love you.

Mith. Oh, unmerciful !

Sem. You said, my Lord, but now,
You blush'd to think of your degraded Power ;
How then ought I to blush ? I, who shou'd be
The daily Curse of your repining Subjects ?
I, who am bound by Oaths and solemn Vows
To love *Ziphares* ? By my Father's Order,
And by the tenderest Inclination too.

Mith. You strike me dead :

Sem. Oh, do but think, my Lord,
How wou'd Mankind, when they shall read my Story,
Tear all the Rolls, or throw 'em to the Flames !
How wou'd the weeping Maids curse my remembrance,
Shou'd I for pride of Power, a Golden Promise,
A gaudy Nothing, prove ingrateful perjur'd ?
Leave all the goodness of the Earth to languish,
And break for ever with his matchless Virtue !

Mith. You have said ; and I confess it to be Heav'nly :
I know, and till I saw your Eyes, I lov'd
The Virtue of my Son ; I lodg'd him near
My Heart, and set him down my Successor :
But now, Oh hear, and wonder at your Power,
Spight of his Noble Acts, tho to his Arm
Powe my Life, tho Justice speaks so loud,
And the soft Tongue of Nature pleads so well ;
I hate him more than I did ever love him.

Sem. Alas ! wou'd I had dy'd when first you saw me.

Mith. Had he conspir'd my Death, usurp'd my Throne,
Perhaps I might have doom'd him to be slain,
Yet sure I shou'd have wept to see him die ;
But now, since he must Ravish that lov'd Gen,

I prize above the World, tearing you from me,
Giving me twenty Deaths, and cutting through
My very Soul, thou'd I my Empire give
To buy his Fate, I'd think it vastly sold.

Sem. Then blasted be the Form that charm'd your Eyes.
His Fate ! Oh, Gods ! then you design his Death,
To reap the Bloody Harvest of his Life,
And, *Atreus*-like, to feed on your own Bowels ?
But know, Proud Monarch, there are Powers who see
And punish Crimes like yours : Nor can I doubt
But they will save from your most Impious Rage
My poor lov'd Lord, the Innocent *Ziphæus*.

Mith. Those Waters more enrage my Jealous Flame,
And those heav'd Sighs but spread my Anger's Wings ;
Your Fatal Kindness hastens on his Death,
And that untimely Doom which I forbore
To execute, seems necessary now :
You give him all your Stock of richest Love,
Your Tears, your longing Looks, your Smiles, your Groans,
And over-blest him with your lavish kindness ;
But niggardly to me you will not spare
A pitying Glance, one Pearly drop, to Ransom
The Soul of this despairing *Mithridates*.

Andræus, go, and bear the Prince to Prison.

Sem. Stay, *Andræus*, the King has call'd you back :
See, he repents : Nay, I must hold you then,
And, if you stir, you take *Semandra* with you.
O, *Mithridates* ! O ungrateful Prince !

What was it you did order ? But behold,
His Eyes are fix'd upon the ground, he blushes
To think he cou'd so monstrously Decree
To murder the sweet hopes of all his Kingdoms,
The Gods be prais'd for this Serene Repentance :
Yet, with the fright, I fear I shall not sleep
Till Death does close my Eyes.

Mith. O wife, *Semandra* !

Sem. Never, I never will.

Oh all you pitying Powers, will not my cries
And piercing Woes move you to melt his Soul ?
Can you be deaf ? Oh Cruel *Mithridates* !

Did you but know the workings you have made,
The heavy plight, the panting Passions here,
If you had but a Grain of all that World
Of Love, you swore you once had for *Semandra*,
You cou'd not see me thus : Misery distracts
My Reason ; shou'd you turn to a new rage,
(Which I must fear, unless you Vow to save him)
I cou'd not bear it ; you shou'd see me fall
Cold, pale, and with my Deaths Convulsions grasping
Your water'd feet, but never more rise.

Mith. Give me your Beauteous Hand ; I swear upon it,
By all those Powers we worship, by our Self,
When e're *Ziphars* dies, *Semandra* kills him :
She shall alone have Power to give him Death,
Or to recal his most untimely Fate.

Enter Ziphars and Archelaus.

Thus dearly do I buy the Red Impression
Which my Lips make ; but take it, take it from me :
My Blood boils up again, my Spirits kindle,
That lovely Brand has lent my wishes flame,
And I am lost again in vast desire.

Ziph. *Semandra* ! live I once to see thee more,
Tho in my Father's Arms ! 'Tis Heav'n, to gaze
On thy assaulted Honour ; thus to see thee,
Thus tempted from me with the Charms of Empire,
Yet not consenting ! No, I'll not think the World,
Laid at thy Feet,
Cou'd win thy Faith !
Yet, O dread Sir, forgive me :
If that my boding Heart suspects you more,
Then all that Heav'n cou'd send down great and charming,
Or Hell cou'd raise up horrid to destroy me.

Mith. O Glory !

Arch. O, consider, Sir, on that ;
Think how the *Romans* will despise your Wars,
If Love now drive you — Speak, my Lord : he yields.

Ziph. Oh, Royal Sir, or if the Name of Father
Can move you more, by that I will Conjure you ;

By all the Charms of *Stratonice's* Eyes,
 When first they drew you to adore their lustre ;
 By all the Pains you gave her when she bore me ;
 By all the Obedience I have paid you long,
 And by the Blood I yet intend to lose
 In your behalf: oh grant me my *Semandra*.

Sem. Ev'n by the Passion my unhappy Beauty
 First kindled in you, but I hope is dying,
 Give me *Ziphares*, give him to my Longings.

Mith. 'Tis done ; the Conquest is at last obtain'd,
 And Manly Virtue Lords it o're my Passion:
 It shall be so ; away, thou feeble God,
 I banish thee my Bosom, hence I say ;
 Be gone, or I will tear the Strings that hold thee,
 And stab thee in my Heart. The Wars come on ;
 By Heav'n, I'll drown thy laughing Deity
 In Blood, and drive thee with my brandish'd Sword
 To *Rome*, I will, yes, to the Capitol,
 There to resume thy Godhead once again,
 And vaunt thy Majesty without controul;
 But never Reign in *Mithridates* Soul.

Arch. O wonderful effect of highest Virtue !
 O Conquest, which deserves more Triumphs than
 A hundred Victories in Battel gain'd.

Ziph. You must, you shall be now the Lord of *Rome* ;
 Her Fate shall bow beneath your Awful Scepter.
 O let me not enjoy the Life you promis'd,
 The vast possession of the rich *Semandra*,
 If I strike not *Rome's* Eagles to the Earth,
 Take the Imperial Standard, Chase their Legions,
 And bring in Triumph all their Leaders bound.

Mith. *Andrarrar*, haste, Proclaim throughout the City
 My Son *Ziphares* General against the *Romans*. [Exit *Andrarrar*.
 Come to my Breast once more, my dearest Son ;
 In spite of Love, thou art again my Child:
 Thus, with a Father's bowels, I receive thee,
 Thus melting o're thee with the tenderest Nature,
 I pray the Gods to Crown thy Youth with glory.

Ziph. Oh Happiness ! Oh Joy ! Oh blessed Tears !
 Reward this Goodness, Heav'n ; for Poor *Ziphares*

Is now so lost, he knows not what to say.
 Let me devour your hands with Filial dearness :
 Were my whole Life to come one heap of Troubles,
 The pleasure of this moment wou'd suffice,
 And sweeten all my griefs with its remembrance.

Sem. Oh happy hour ! if I not set thee down,
 The whitest that the Eye of Time e're saw,
 Let me ne're smile when I remember thee,
 Nor ev'n in wishes offer at a Joy. [Shouting within.]

Mith. Hark ! with loud Cryes the Souldiers send their joys:
 Go then, with the best Blessings I can give thee,
 Conduct my chearful Subjects to the Field,
 Take all the fighting Virgins wishes with thee:
 Subdue the *Consul*, and receive *Semandra*.

Ziph. O do not doubt me, my most Royal Lord;
 If now I Conquer not, thus helpt; thus promis'd,
 Thus prais'd, encourag'd, and thus over-blest,
 I am the Mark, for all
 The Synod of the Gods to shoot their Fires at.

Mith. Semandra, veil your Beauties from my eyes;
 I wou'd not trust their Influence, tho I thank
 The Pow'rs above, so strongly Reigns my Virtue,
 I think I might, and fear not a relapse:
 In an Apartment, proper for your grief,
 You shall be plac'd, till yours and my *Ziphares*
 Return in Triumph ; where no eyes shall see
 Your private walks, nor mark your secret sorrows:
 I thus divide you, that your meeting may
 Be yet more grateful. Haste, my Son, to-Battel:
 Be short in parting, for there is no end
 Of Lovers Farewels. The Powers above preserve you.

[Exit *Mith.* with *Pelop.* and *Andra*.]

Ziph. Farewel *Semandra* ; O, if my Father shou'd
 Fall back from Virtue, 'tis an impious thought,
 Yet I must ask you ; cou'd you in my absence,
 Solicited by Power and Charming Empire
 And threatned too by death, forget your Vows?
 Cou'd you, I say, abandon poor *Ziphares*,
 Who mid'st of Wounds and Death wou'd think on you?
 And, whatsoe're Calamity shou'd come,

Wou'd keep his love sacred to his *Semandra*,
Like Balm, to heal the heaviest misfortune?

Sem. Your cruel question tears my very Soul :
Ah, can you doubt me, Prince? A Faith, like mine,
The softest Passion that e're Woman wept ;
But as resolv'd as ever man cou'd boast :
Alas, why will you then suspect my Truth ?
Yet, since it shows the fearfulness of Love,
'Tis just I shou'd endeavour to convince you :
Make bare your Sword, my Noble Father, draw.

Arch. What wou'dst thou now ?

Sem. I swear upon it, Oh,
Be witness, Heav'n, and all avenging Powers,
Of the true love I give the Prince *Ziphares* :
When I in thought forsake my plighted Faith,
Much less in act, for Empire change my love ;
May this keen Sword by my own Fathers hand
Be guided to my Heart, rip Veins and Arteries,
And cut my faithless limbs from this hack'd body,
To feed the ravenous Birds, and Beasts of prey.

Arch. Now, by my Sword, 'twas a good hearty wish ;
And, if thou play'st him false, this faithful hand
As heartily shall make thy wishes good.

Ziph. O hear mine too. If e're I fail in ought
That Love requires in strictest, nicest kind ;
May I not only be proclaim'd a Coward,
But be in deed that most detested thing.
May I, in this most glorious War I make,
Be beaten basely, even by *Glabrio's* Slaves,
And for a punishment lose both these eyes ;
Yet live, and never more behold *Semandra*.

[*Trumpets*]

Arch. Come, no more wishing ; Hark, the Trumpets call.

Sem. Preserve him, Gods, preserve his Innocence ;
The Noblest Image of your perfect selves :
Farewel ; I'm lost in Tears. Where are you, Sir ?

Arch. He's gone. Away, my Lord, you'll never part.

Ziph. I go, but must turn back for one last look :
Remember, O remember, dear *Semandra*,
That on thy Virtue all my Fortune hangs.
Semandra is the business of the War.

King of PONTUS.

27

Semandra makes the Fight, draws every Sword:
Semandra sounds the Trumpets; gives the Word.
So the Moon Charms her watry World below;
Wakes the still Seas, and makes 'em Ebb and Flow.

Exeunt.

ACT III. SCENE I.

The Field.

Enter Ziphars bloody, with Souldiers.

Ziph. **A** Re these, are these the Masters of the World?
O my brave Friends, how have you fought to day!
You fought, as if you all had Mistresses,
Who from some Battlement beheld your Valour,
And from your Arms expected all their Fortune:
Oh, had you heard 'em clap their tender hands,
Beat their white Breasts, and rend the wond'ring Heav'ns
With their shrill cries, you cou'd not have done more;
Your looks were *Basilisks* to Roman Blood,
Your very Breath was as the furious *North*,
And drove the Legions, like the Chaff, before you.
Nor was I idle; witness the wounds I feel,
Tho *Glabrio*, at distance, shun'd the force
Of my far-darted Javelin, yet it struck
A Tribune down, and did not usefess fall.
What more remains, but that we haste to meet
Victorious *Archelaus*, plunder their Tents,
And loaded with the Laurel we have won,
March to *Synope*, shouting all the way,
Long live the King of Kings, great *Mithridates*!

Enter Archelaus, attended.

Arch. O Prince! thou Life, thou Soul of all the Army,
To whose dear hand thrice I did owe my life,
When thrice this day my Horse was kill'd beneath me,
O Renown'd day! this one day of thy Valour

Has drown'd in dark Oblivion all my Wars :
 Like Time it self, thy Glory shall run on,
 While mine, my fifty Iron-years of battel,
 Lies smeer'd in dust, and moulder into Ashes.

Ziph. Yes, Father, now I cou'd grow proud of Conquest,
 Since it must give your Daughter to my Arms.

Methought to day, when I had given the word,
Semandra, Victory declar'd her self.

E're yet a Death by any hand was given :
 Ev'n now my blood more heats my youthful veins,
 My Cheeks grow redder, with the expectation
 Of Love's dear promis'd joys, than when I strove
 In flame of fight, with all my toil upon me,
 To cut my way, and win the famous Field.

Arch. Grant me, you Gods, before the hand of Death
 Comes, like Eternal Night with her dark Wing,
 To bar the comfortable light for ever
 From these my aged eyes ; O let me see
 A Grandchild of my Princes Sacred Blood,
 To call him mine, to feel him in my Arms,
 To hear his innocent talk, and see him smile,
 While I tell Stories of his Fathers Valour,
 Which he in time must learn to imitate :
 Grant me but this, you Gods, and make an end,
 Soon as you please, of this old happy man.

Ziph. I feel a gladness lightning in my breast,
 The kindled joy disperses quickly through me,
 And says: E're yet the setting-Sun has quench'd
 His Love in his cold Mistress Bed,
Semandra shall be mine ; ev'n all *Semandra* :
 The thought is Extasie ! these Arms shall hold her
 Fast to my throbbing Breast ; these ravish'd eyes
 Gaze till they're blind, with looking on her Blushes ;
 These stifling Lips shall smother all her Smiles,
 And follow her with such pursuit of Kisses,
 That ev'n our Souls shall lose themselves in pleasure.

Arch. First, send a Flying Messenger, with news
 Of our great Victory.

Ziph. *Ziphars* self
 Must be the Harbinger of his own joy :

I'll go, with the best-mounted Cavalry;
While you behind conduct, on easie March,
The wear'd Army. Once more let me look
My Father thus.

Arch. My heart bodes happiness.

Ziph. 'Twere sin to doubt, since Fortune had no hand
In what our Swords by dint of Valour won.
She to the Brave was ever a curst Foe;
But I at last have bound her to my Chariot,
By Conquering Virtue to be drag'd along;
And while her broken Wheel is proudly born,
She shall be forc'd our Triumph to adorn.

Exeunt severally.

SCENE II.

The Palace-Garden.

Enter Pharnaces and Andragar.

Andr. **T**hen there is hope, my Lord, th' unsettled King
May yet relapse, and fall to Love again?

Phar. 'Tis certain that the end will Crown our wishes.
Late, as I pry'd about *Semandra's* Gardens,
Mad that our Plot a-ground, so plough'd to bear,
Shou'd yield no Fruit, still thoughtful how to work him,
And watching for some accident, to fit
Our purpose, and redeem the last design,
I chanc'd to spy the fair *Semandra* sleeping;
But, in that posture, she appear'd so lovely,
Bold as I am, the Charm'd me into wonder:
But strait thy General came to rescue me,
Who took the hint immediately, and went
To see the King.

Andr. I guess the good design;
To draw him on to see our beauteous Pœ.

Phar. You have it; and 'tis more than half effected.
I saw 'em walk: *Pelopidas*, by his action,
I know did kindle him with wondrous praise;
But once to view the bright *Semandra* sleeping;
But the King stopt, as if he fear'd to go;

Then side-long glanc'd, and sigh'd, and walk'd again,
 Rubbing his hand upon his Face, to hide
 The rising Blushes: but, behold 'em here!

Enter Mithridates, Pelopidas.

Mith. What are her Charms to me?

Pelop. 'Tis true, they are not;
 And yet, methinks, the sight might draw down *Jove*—
 Yet, I'de not ask you, for the World, to see her;
 But that I think you're Matter of your promise:
 I thought your God-like frame, your strength of mind
 Not to be shook, therefore I woo'd you, Sir,
 In Curiosity, to see a Wonder;
 But, if you doubt your self.

Mith. I think I need not:
 I think my Vertue is resolv'd; but yet,
 I fear, and therefore I will go no farther.

Pelop. 'Tis well resolv'd; and yet, methinks, 'twou'd raise
 Your pity, more than love, to see the tears
 Force through her snowy lids their melting course,
 To lodge themselves on her red mourning lips
 That talk such mournful things, when strait, a gale
 Of starting sighs carries those Pearls away,
 As Dews, by Winds, are wafted from the Flowers.

Mith. 'Tis wondrous pitiful, by Heav'n, it is!
 I feel her sorrow working here; it calls
 Fire to my breast, and water to my eyes,
 And, if I durst.

Pelop. If you the least suspect
 Your temper, if the smallest Breath of Love
 But stir your heart; let me Conjure you, Sir,
 Not to go on: the dazzling manner will
 Disturb your quiet, and confound your Reason.

Mith. 'Twill be as well, tho' I believe no Power
 Can change my Virtue, yet 'twill be as well
 If you relate exactly what you saw.

Pelop. Behold her then upon a Flowry Bank,
 With her soft sorrows lul'd into a slumber,
 The Summers heat had, to her natural blush;

Added a brighter, and more tempting red ;
 The Beauties of her Neck and naked Breasts,
 Lifted by inward starts, did rise and fall
 With motion that might put a Soul in Statues :
 The matchless whiteness of her foulded Arms,
 That seem'd t' imbrace the Body whence they grew,
 Fix'd me to gaze o're all that Field of Love,
 While to my ravih'd eyes officious winds,
 Waving her Robes, display'd such handsome Limbs,
 As Artists wou'd in Polish'd Marble give
 The Wanton Goddes, when supinely laid
 She Charms her Gallant God to new enjoyment.

Mith. Something there is firs mightily my Breast ;
 'Tis Pity, sure, it can be only Pity :
 Who knows, but that her multiplying fears,
 And cruel griefs, in time, may give her death ?
 'Twere most Inhumane therefore not to go,
 And comfort her, with praises of Ziphares :
 I'll tell her how he Conquers, how he comes
 Triumphant from the Consul's overthrow,
 To take the Noble Wreaths he has deserv'd,
 Embraces from her Arms ; Circles more elch
 Than all the Crowns my fruitless Valour won.
 Yet, stay ; I will not speak of him : 'twere rude
 To break her rest ; I'll see her, when she wakes.

Pelop. Then you dare trust your heart ?

Mith. 'Tis sure I dare :
 By Heav'n, my Friends, I dare : I feel such strong
 Collected Manly Virtue, that I'll on.

Pelop. Oh, sacred Sir, turn back : if, Conquer'd by
 Her Beauties, you shou'd love again, I know
Pelopidas must bear the blame of all ;
 Therefore, my Lord.

Mith. Away ; by Heav'n, I'll go.

Pelop. Oh, 'tis impossible, if once you lov'd
 But you must certainly relapse :
 Therefore your fearful Servant kneels and begs
 You wou'd turn back : Atlas, he's conscious now
 What a gross fault his foolish tongue committed,
 By tempting unawares your Reason forth.

Mith. I'll see her ; yes, it is resolv'd ; I'll see her,
With all that World of Charms thou hast describ'd ;
Therefore arise, and lead the way.

Pelop. Alas,
My Lord, I fear you ; but it is your pleasure,
And I'm your Slave.

Mith. Reply not ; but obey. [Exit *Mith.* *Pelop.*

Phar. I feel a pleasant expectation breeding ;
His starts, his stops : by *Mars*, he loves her still :
Joyn then the much prevailing circumstance,
Of Time, and Place ; the absence of my Brother,
To make Guilt bold ; the lowness of her Mansion :
Both strong Incentives to a violent Lover.

Andr. Then Love has blest you on the other hand,
Since, by our subtil practices, we brought
Monima to disgrace ; with whom you may
Divert, till we have gain'd our full Revenge.
I have the guard of her.

Phar. I'm glad thou hast.
Then, to compleat the ruine of *Zipharas*,
I hear his Mother, fearful of th' Event
Of this long War, and loving him as life,
With *Pompey* holds private Intelligence ;
And has, to *Rome*, given all those Castles up,
Which she had charge of, to preserve her Son.

Andr. This, when occasion calls, I'll aggravate,
To mad your Father more. But see, the General !

[Enter *Pelopidas*]

Pelop. He's gone ; he's ruin'd ; quite transported with
The Extravagance of Love : I left him kneeling
Close to her side, winding about his Heart
Such Nets of Beauty, as must hold him fast ;
Therefore, when he approaches us for comfort,
Showing his griefs, and seeking shroud for guilt,
Let us encourage, to our utmost power,
What e're his Violent Love does put in act.

Enter Mithridates.

Mith. Torment of heart ! Oh, feeble Virtue ! hence,
I blow thee from the Palace, to the Cottage;
To build in Hearts of Hinds, blest their rude hands
With thy lean recompence of endless labour :
For me, since I have burst th' ungrateful Chain
That held me to thee like a shackled Slave,
I will enjoy what e're the Gods have given,
And surfeit on the Beauties of *Semandra*.

Oh, my dear Son, my best, my own *Pharnaces* ;
By Heav'n, thou never did'st oppose my pleasure,
As does *Ziphæes* : but I'll cast him out,
That Bosom-Wolf, who laps my dearest blood,
And lodg thee there ; thou wilt not rack me thus.

Phar. The Gods forbid. But why, Sir, will you bear it ?

Pelop. I cou'd not think you lov'd her at this rate ;
Therefore I hope forgotten Virtue yielded
To bolder pleasures, and you quench'd your fires.

Mith. Drawn by resistless Love, I put one knee
To Earth, and gently bowing down my head,
First took at distance the sweet-wafted breath ;
Which blew my flames to such a raging height,
That straight I fell upon her Balmy Lips,
And glew'd my own so fiercely, that she wak'd :
And, starting up, soon vanish'd from my sight,
Leaving me dumb, pale, languishing, and dying,
Rent with her Charms, distracted with the rage
Of my desires, and torn with cruel Love.

Pelop. Why stopt you there ? I wou'd have follow'd her
Into her inmost Closet ; pardon me,
If I prove passionate to see you thus :
Better a million of such slight-soul'd things
Were ravish'd, massacred, than *Mithridates*
Suffer one moments care.

Phar. I have no patience.
By your great Glory, 'twas not Nobly done :
I th' midst of groans, and cries, and gushing tears,
I wou'd have ravish'd her ; — your Royal Hand,

Lock'd in her Amber-Hair, shou'd then have forc'd her ;
 Who knows, but opposition mounts the joy ?
 Like that *Athenian* Tyrant, who ne're took
 His Barge for pleasure, but in highest Storms ;
 Then wou'd he stand like *Neptune* on his Deck,
 And laugh to see the *Dolphins* back the billows.

Andr. Say but the word, I'll fetch her from the Altar
 To your imbraces : never did I see

So strange an alteration ; your fierce eye,
 Which, like the Sun at Noon, none cou'd behold
 But with a snatch of light, and then be dazled :
 Now, like a cold and drouzy Winter-star,
 Bears a bleak brightness. O decay of lustre !

Mith. I am not as I was.--Ha! whence this noise? [*Shout within.*

Ex. Pelop. and Andra.

Phar. My Lord; this Passion has unman'd you quite:
 Forgetful of the glorious Fields you won,
 You lose your dear-bought Honours in a day,
 And sell your Fame to your ambitious Son.
 The Coward *Glabrio*, whom by flying Agents
 I hear, in divers Skirmishes he vanquish'd,
 Has swell'd him so, and blown him to that height,
 He rides upon the shoulders of his Army:
 They heave him, as he were a God, in Air,
 And dance before him, shouting in their Songs,
 You are their *Saturn*, but the Prince their *Jove*,
 All that their waning Faith can give Ambition ;
 And he too laughs, to hear the thundering Titles.

Mith. And, for a recompence, shall I bestow
 Upon this Traytor, all I love on Earth ?
 No, my *Pharnaces*, I have mark'd him dead,
 If that *Semandra's* loss can bring his ruine :
 Not but the thought I go with shows me just
 To what she shall appear : the Noble wile
 Kills by her seeming Infidelity.

Monima too must perish for dishonour ;
 But rather to make way for my new Love,
 And fix the giddy People on my side.
 Again these shouts ?

[*Shouts again.*]

Phar. I guess *Zipheres* comes.

Mith. Down, struggling Nature;
Die, die, thou Ravisher of my Repose;
Be strangled in me all remorse, all thoughts
Of pity; yet I will be calmly cruel,
Nor shall he find the depth of my Revenge.

Enter Andravar.

Andr. Your Son has Conquer'd, mightiest of Kings;
But by a way so infamously base,
I fear my doom will scarce be less than death
For the relation.

Mith. Monstrous may it be;
For I so hate him now, I wish for Crimes
Of deepest grain, for colour to his Fate.

Andr. His Royal Mother, the False *Stratonice*,
To whom you gave in Custody *Inora*,
The strongest, richest Fort of all the East,
E're he with *Glabrio* joyn'd, to *Rome* did yield
That wondrous mass of treasure, with her Honour.

Mith. Curst State of Monarchs! Let the judging World
Now weigh our pleasures, with our mightier troubles,
And find us happier than the rest of men!
False Beauty, thou shalt die, thou bane of greatness;
Or, if I cannot reach thy fickle being,
I'll punish thee by ruining *Ziphares*.

Andr. This have I learnt by frequent Messengers,
Who warrant with their lives, how by consent
Glabrio but skirmish'd with the Prince your Son,
And was by *Stratonice* brib'd before.

Mith. Plots, Treasons, horrid black Conspiracies?
Mother and Son, Oh Parricides! combine,
But if you scape me, may I sleep my Reign out.

Enter Pelopidas.

What says *Pelopidas*? What of *Ziphares*?
Bring'st thou more matter for my Curses? Speak.

Pelop. He comes, my Lord, and with a Port so proud,
As if he had subdu'd the spacious World,

And all *Synope's* Streets are fill'd with such
 A glut of People, you wou'd think some God
 Had conquer'd in their Cause, and they thus rank'd
 That he might make his entrance on their heads :
 While from the Scaffolds, Windows, tops of Houses,
 Are cast such gaudy show'rs of Garlands down,
 That ev'n the Croud appear like Conquerors,
 And the whole City seems like one vast Meadow,
 Set all with Flowers, as a clear Heav'n with Stars.

Mith. Ungrateful Slaves ! by *Mars*, when I return'd,
 Worn with the hardship of a ten-years War,
 My Army's heavy-gaited, bruis'd and hack'd,
 With cutting *Roman* lives ;
 They ne're receiv'd me with a pomp like this :

Pelop. Nay, as I heard, e're he the City enter'd,
 Your Subjects lin'd the ways for many furlongs ;
 The very Trees bore men : and, as our God,
 When from the Portal of the *East* he dawns,
 Beholds a thousand Birds upon the boughs,
 To welcom him with all their warbling throats,
 And prune their feathers in his Golden Beams ;
 So did your Subjects, in their gaudy'st trim,
 Upon the pendant branches, speak his praise.
 Mothers, who cover'd all the banks beneath,
 Did rob their crying Infants of the breast,
 Pointing *Ziphares* out to make 'em smile ;
 And climbing Boys stood on their Father's shoulders,
 Answering their shouting Sires with tender cries,
 To make the Consort up of general joy.

Mith. What, will you bear your part too ? Oh the Gods !
 He is transported with the ample Theam,
 And plays the Orator ! Plagues rot thy Tongue,
 And blasted be the Lungs that breath'd his welcom ;
 Perish the Bodies that went forth to meet him,
 A prey for Worms, to stink in hollow ground,
 O, Viper ! Villain ! not content to take
 My Love, but Life ! wilt thou unthrone me too ?
 Shall *Mithridates* live to be depos'd ;
 A Stale, the Image of what once he was ;
 The very Ghost of his departed Greatness.

A thing for Slaves to be familiar with,
To gape, to nod, and sleep in my scorn'd face?
Awake, awake, thou sluggish Majesty,
Rouze thee to Act; tho all the Elements,
Tho Heav'n and Hell, Subjects and Sons conspire,
With Fate thy Empires fall; oppose their will:
Dare to the last, and be a Monarch still.

[Exit.]

Pelop. What think you now?

Phar. I think, for my Revenge,
For any act that witty horror asks,
Thou art an Instrument so black and fit,
The *Furies* joyn'd in Council cou'd not match thee.
But see, *Ziphares* comes: with what a Train
Of Priests! nay, then the God must be Adored.

The Scene being drawn, represents Ziphares's Triumph, which is a Street full of Pageants, crouded with People, who from the windows sling down Garlands: others dance before him, while the Priests sing, Ziphares resting under a Canopy of State.

Ziph. Enough, my Friends, my Noble Countrymen,
I am indebted to your Bounties ever;
But let me now Conjure you, cease the noise
Of your loud thanks, lest we disturb the King:
We're near the Palace, and my boding heart
Says he interprets rudely this our Triumph
Which you, against my will, have forc'd upon me;
Therefore *Ziphares* begs you to retire:
By the small Victories my Arms have gain'd,
If you have any Love, as much you show,
Let me intreat you all, by that affection,
Ev'n now, upon this instant, to disband.

All. Long live our King, and Noble Prince, *Ziphares*.
[Exeunt shouting.]

Phar. Welcom, *Ziphares*, welcom to *Synope*;
Still, when Fate calls thee forth, may'st thou return,
Thus swell'd, thus Lord Triumphant o're the *Romans*.

Ziph. Had I subdu'd the World, I shou'd detest
The Title of Triumpher, and scarce think

That man my friend who praises at your rate.

Pelop. Had not the Monster multitude receiv'd you Sir,
With such a monstrous State, methinks,
Like *Hercules*, you shou'd have slain the *Hydra*.

Andr. Heard you but Sir, how, with hundred mouths,
It worship'd, as you were already Crown'd:
Long live our King, the Noble Prince *Ziphaxes*?

Ziph. What, Villains! Ha! Gods, have I flesh and bear it?
Pharnaces, off; by my just wrath they die. *[Exeunt Pel. and Andr.]*

Phar. The King! remember how this Rage will sound.

Ziph. O the curst Traytors! Brother, beware of 'em:

How e're they crouch at present to your Fortune,

For I perceive your favour warm'd the Snakes

To stir, they have no sense of gratitude:

I found 'em base, and therefore did discard 'em;

For which, the Slaves have sworn me mortal hate;

But if I live I'll crush 'em.

Phar. You't to the King?

Ziph. I will. Methinks this meeting was unlucky;

My heart misgives me more, and higher beats

With this last heat, than all the toil of War:

Perhaps, they move the King; but sure not much:

Or if they do, tho our great Father frowns,

One smile, one tear of joy from my *Semandra*

Will wash the anger of the Gods away.

[Exit.]

Phar. Go, and the welcom that I wish attend thee.

Of all my Elder Brothers, he remains.

To cross my hopes, and bar me from the Crown:

Whom yet I doubt not, by my *Eagins* help,

To burst in sunder, and then gild my Brows,

Methinks I shou'd become the Golden Hoop

That circles in one quarter of the Globe:

I have it just; my Scepter waving thus,

The starting Princes run to clear my way.

Enter Mithridates, Semandra, Pelopidas, Andravar, Guards.

But hold, my Father comes, with sad *Semandra*!

Weep on; while I go laugh my cares away!

With *Monima*, who must or yield or die.

[Exit.]

Mith. Has not the Traytor won my Subjects hearts ?
 Has not his Mother basely too, betray'd me ?
 Has he not dar'd to Triumph without leave ?
 Which, when my faithfulst worthist Councellers
 Rebuk'd him for, with mild and gentle Language,
 He redned with proud anger, drew his Sword ;
 Then, like a monstrous Parricide, came on
 Here, to my Palace, Heading the wild Croud,
 So through the Bodies of my Friends to pass,
 Till with his barbarous hand he reach'd my Bosom.

Sem. 'Tis false ; 'tis all most horrid Perjury ;
 And the curs'd spotted Souls of these vile Traytors
 Shall burn for this beneath : I know they hate
 The Gallant Prince, and now conspire against him ;
 With words, made up with all the blasts of Hell
 They strike your sacred Ears, bewitch your Senses,
 And with those Spells that foulest Treason hatcht,
 Stagger your Royal Reason. O yet hear me !

Mith. From what I have decreed, no Charm, no Pow'r,
 No Eloquence ; not Mercy's self, adorn'd
 In all *Semandra's* Beauties, in her tears,
 Prostrate upon the Earth, and hanging on
 My knees, nay dying with her grief, shall move me.

Sem. I now believe you are not to be mov'd ;
 Therefore with my undaunted Innocence,
 I stand to hear the Doom you have decreed.

Mith. If when *Ziphares*, at your first appearance,
 Runs to your Arms, fir'd with expected joys,
 You thrust him not away, and slight him strangely,
 With all the marks of the most proud disdain,
 That a most faithless and ambitious Woman
 Cou'd shew to gain the Empire of the World ;
 He shall be stab'd, be murder'd by my Guards,
 Before your eyes.

Sem. O, 'tis not possible,
 That you can mean the dreadful things you speak :
 You speak it but to try the poor *Semandra*.

Mith. Mark me most heedfully, for 'tis most true ;
 And sooner shall a dooming God recal
 His *Stygian* Oath, than I renounce my Vow :

He dies, I say, if you receive him nor
 With all the coldness of a fair Apostate,
 Whose Chastity the poyson of sweet Power
 Had brought to ruine, whose protested Faith
 The Charms of Empire had quite turn'd to Air.

Sem. Gods, do you hear the Tyrant?

Mith. Do you hear me?

If to your words, which must make plain your falshood,
 Your looks shou'd give the Lye, by amorous glances,
 And languishings, for Lovers eyes will talk;
 Or, as you speak your hate, mixt sighs arise,
 Or faultring speech, or any other mark,
 To show that you are forc'd to what you say;
 Then, from the place where I shall stand conceal'd,
 I'll give the Signal to my waiting Guards,
 Who in a moment shall destroy your Lover,
 When all your tears and sighs shall not recal him.

Sem. I'll die, I'll die, ten thousands deaths I'll die,
 Rather than meet him thus: what, after all
 The dreadful Imprecations that I made him,
 And swore upon my Fathers Sword, a Faith,
 A spotless Love, for ever to endure;
 Shall I abjure my Oaths, and to his face
 Protest a falshood, and belye my heart?

Mith. Take your own course; I have sworn.

Sem. O Tyranny!

What, shall I meet him after all his hardships,
 After the heats and colds, and smarting wounds,
 Which for my sake he patiently endur'd,
 Still chearing up himself, that after all
 The blood he lost, he shou'd enjoy *Semandra*,
 His gentle Mistress one day shou'd reward him,
 For the long mischiefs of a cruel VVar?

Mith. I have not leisure now to hear complaints:
 Either resolve t' obey, and speedily,
 Or you and I must never see him more.

Sem. Stay, Royal Sir, come back: ne're see him more!
 And if I die, rather than see him thus,
 Will you not save his life?

Mith. Your death, *Semandra*!

King of PONTUS.

41

The very mention hastens on his fate.

Sem. Alas, alas ! I fear, if I but look
As if I knew him not, or had forgot him,
So nice and tender is his love,
So soft his disposition, 'twill be fatal.

Mith. Then, you resolve his death ?

Sem. It cannot be.

No, I will see him, tho I must be cruel ;
But bate a little of your Imposition:
An unkind word will kill the poor *Ziphares*,
As sure as all the hate which you injoyn me.

Enter IImenes.

Fidel. The Prince *Ziphares* begs admittance of
Your Majesty.

Mith. You must retire, *Semandra*.

Sem. O Torment ! O the Racks of Love distress
Like mine ! of Passion at a loss like mine !
Help me, you Gods, or I shall faint with bearing.

[Exit.]

Mith. Call in the Prince. — What, Nature yet again ?
I charge thee trouble my repose no more.

Enter Ziphares.

Ziph. 'Tis well, you Powers that pry into our hearts,
Well have I lost my dearest blood in battel,
Since once again I see my Royal Father.

Mith. *Ziphares*, rise ; I hear you have fought well,
Too well perhaps for *Mithridates* peace:
You Triumph'd too, I hear.

Ziph. Alas, my Lord,
I fear *Pelopidas* and *Andravar*
Have been too busie with your Ear.
By my best hopes, by your most Sacred Life,
I wou'd not Triumph till your Orders came ;
At least, they told me, that they came from you :
If they were false, —

Mith. They were your Friends who brought .
Those Orders ; therefore you are not in fault :

Nor ought you share the Crimes of *Stratonice*.

Ziph. Of *Stratonice* ! Ah, what has she done ?
Ah, Sir, what Villain has traduc'd my Mother ?
Give me to know——

Mith. Perhaps you 're ignorant :
Wou'd I had been so too ; but to the purpose.
I promis'd, when the *Consul* was o'recome,
To give *Semandra* to you : — Seem not sad,
You love your Father well ; but, Prince, I know
Your Passion for *Semandra* is the highest :
I'll send her to you, if you please retain her. [Exit.

Ziph. Is this then thy reward, unnecessary Virtue ?
Why do we wear thee thus, to our undoing ?
O, inauspicious Stars ! thy Father hates thee,
Because thou art too good ! went it not so ?
I fought too well ! His eye disdain'd me too,
And held my High Desert at hateful distance :
But, let it be, there's satisfaction still
In Innocence : and conscious Glory tells me,
My Griefs shall fly, like Clouds, before *Semandra*.

Enter *Semandra*.

But see, the Sun that drives 'em ! O my Star !
Thou Day, that gild'st my little World of comfort,
Give me thy warmth, let me, upon thy Bosom,
Breathe all my Victories. Alas, the King,
My cruel Father,—— Ha ! what now, *Semandra* ?
Not fly into my arms ! O all you Pow'rs
That Nurs'd our tender Loves, she turns away !
Hast thou too caught the coldness of my Father ?
Clear me, you Gods, and fix my Understanding
To this one view, lest I mistake all measure,
And run to madness. What, not look upon me ?
By Heav'n, if thus, if thus I shou'd behold thee,
Tho in a Dream, 'twou'd make me wish to sleep for ever.
O my dear Life ! thou shalt not hide thy kindness,
But to dissemble thus a moment longer,
Wou'd quite destroy the Passionate *Ziphars*.
I'll force thy hand, thus, to my trembling lips.

Sem. The kiss you ravish, Prince, is dangerous ;
And let me now Conjure you, by your Love,
If you can love after what I injoin you,
Upon your life, offer the like no more.

O Man me, Reason, with thy utmost force ;
Or Passion, with the dreadful starts it makes,
Will soon Divorce my Soul from this weak Body.

Ziph. What hast thou said ? and, Ah ! what have I heard ?
Fair cruel faithless, for the blood I lost,
Dost thou thus meet me ? Raise thy eyes from Earth,
And tell me, Have I, Ah, have I deserv'd
This usage from my dear ador'd *Semandra* ?

Sem. You deserve all things ; but you must not ask
My Love, unless you wish me most unhappy.

Ziph. O, you good Gods ! is it then come to this ?
Shall I, shall I——but speak it once again,
Unhappy ! did'st thou, cou'dst thou say unhappy ?

Sem. I'de have you strive, my Lord, to love me less,

Ziph. If you wou'd have it so, be witness, Heav'n,
If for your quiet you injoin me this,
I'll strive ; but (oh !) 'tis most impossible :
Ah, may I not presume to ask, if this
The reason be why I shou'd love you less,
That the too happy King may love you more ?——

——Your silence does confirm *Ziphares* lost :

And all that I cou'd fear is come upon me.

Ah, Barbarous King ! I'll bear thy Bonds no longer ;

But cast off Duty, as thou hast all Love,

Thou bloody Author of this wretched Being.

Tyrant——

Sem. Take heed, *Ziphares*, how you wrong your Father :
I've heard you give another Character,
So different from this last, of *Mithridates*,
Methinks you scarce appear the same *Ziphares*
Whom once I knew.

Ziph. It is most sure I do not ;
But, to convince me more, quite to compleat
The cruel sum of all my desp'rate woes,
And sink me ever ; what, Madam, have you heard
Me say ? or, rather, what is't you wou'd say

In ill-time prais'd, of this inhumane Father?

Sem. Have I not heard you speak the tender'st things,
How, but for some few faults, so small, that scarce
The Eye of Envy or of Hate cou'd find 'em,
He wou'd be perfect as the Gods themselves;
A King so awful, that the *Romans* fear'd him,
A King so merciful, *Barbarians* lov'd him?
A King——

Ziph. No more; I am confirm'd: she's lost:
The King! she's gone, the Beauty of the Earth,
All that in Woman cou'd be Virtue call'd
Is lost.

Corrupted are her Noble Faculties,
The temper of her Soul is quite infected:
Inconstancy, the Plague that first or last
Taints the whole Sex, the catching Court-disease,
Has spotted all her white, her Virgin Beauties.

Sem. You think me false-- Ah, 'tis but just you shou'd!
But, Prince, I swear, I am not what you think me;
Yet never can be yours.

Ziph. O confusion!
Never! O horror? never can be yours!
Thou tear'st my heart! call back those dreadful words;
Tho thou art going, yet thou art not gone:
Ah, e're it be too late, behold me gasping.
Come to my Arms; Oh, leave me not for ever:
Fall on my Bosom, I'll forget thy weakness;
Try to deceive my self with specious Reasons,
Never upbraid thee that thou once wert false,
But with my tears wash all thy stains away. (Counsel,

Sem. Since tears (O help me Heav'n!) are vain; take, take my
Chear your sad heart, and grieve, Oh grieve no more!

Ziph. Then thou art lost? resolv'd upon my ruine?

Sem. Your life's too precious: I resolve against it!
Not for ten thousand Worlds--What was I saying? [Aside.
What shall I say? Live, live, thou lost *Ziphares*.

Ziph. No, thou perfidious Maid, thou wretched Beauty,
Ziphares loves thee still; so well he loves thee,
That he will die, to rid thee of a torment.
Where are thy Vows? O think upon thy Father,

How this will cut him; this thy cruel Change,
And break his aged heart: or, ere he dies,
Think, if his kindled rage shou'd execute
What he has sworn, to hack thy beauteous Limbs,
Tear thy false flesh into a thousand pieces.

Sem. If that were all my fear!

Ziph. What, hardned! Oh my Stars!
So quickly perfect in the curst Trade?
I shall go mad with the Imagination:
O heart! tho Heav'n had op'd the pregnant Clouds,
And teem'd, with all the never-erring Gods,
To swear on Earth *Semandra* had been false,
Semandra had been false to her *Zipharses*,
I wou'd not have believ'd.

Sem. I cannot bear this grief, nor must I cure it.
Farewel—O Prince—Instruct me, Heav'n to save him. } *Aside.*

Ziph. Stay thee; there's something, ere we part forever,
That I wou'd speak: if I cou'd make it way.

Sem. Speak then, and speak the mournful things you can,
To break both hearts.

Ziph. Thou hast undone me; like a Silver-Frost,
Thou com'st upon the Flower of all my Youth,
To nip the tender Bud, and blast my Glory:
Yet I will live, *Semandra*, I will live,
To save thee from thy Father's cruel rage;
For, wicked as thou art, with grief, I feel
My Soul looks after thee, and seeks thy safety.

Sem. I shall not hold; I feel the climbing grief:
My eyes grow full, and I shall give him Death. } *Aside.*

Ziph. Farewel! Thus, kneeling at thy feet, I part
These parting tears; and sure, the happy King,
In pity will allow this dying Kiss,
Which my cold lips print on thy faithless hand.
Oh, all my Vows, for ever here I leave you;
And, since we never, never must behold
Each other more, I'll breath 'em once again:
Farewel, *Semandra*. O, thou'lt never find,
In all thy search of Love, a heart like mine.
Once more, Farewel for ever, false *Semandra*.

What? yet again thy name? will my Charm'd tongue
Sound nothing but *Semandra*? Oh, *Semandra*!

Exit.

Enter Mithridates, with Priests.

Sem. The cruel Task is done, and I can hold
No longer!—

Come back *Semandra*, Empire, Empire calls thee,
Op'n thy eyes to meet thy coming glory!

Sem. O barb'rous Prince, may I not die in quiet?

Mith. Talk not of dying,
See this Holy Man—

Sem. Holy, Profane,
All things are now alike to my distraction.

Mith. He instantly shall joyn your hand with mine.

Sem. What means the Tyrant?

Mith. You are now our Queen.

Sem. First let me seek a Dragon in his Den;

Embrace an *Aspic*, curl with *Basilisks*,

E're I give up this Body, this poor Beauty
To any but my Lord, the wrong'd *Zephare*.

Mith. I guess you wou'd not, by your free consent;
But I shall force, if you refuse to yield:

This moment I will take you in my Chariot,
Streight to the Temple, and in publick Wed you;

Tho you refuse to joyn in Ceremony,
Instead of sacred words vowing loud Curses,

'Twill not avail; for when the Mystery's done,
I'll bear you back, and as my Queen enjoy you.

Sem. I will be drag'd, die stifled, with my grief.

Mith. You have the Will, but not the Power to die.

Sem. None! is there none? no pitying God awake?
And are your Priests Confederate in my ruine?

They sure will tell you of your Tyranny,

And fear too much the anger of the Heav'ns,

To force a helpless Virgin: they will speak

Your Crimes abroad; will you not, Holy Men?

Mith. Let me but hear the Holiest of 'em cross me,

By Heav'n, he shall go Sacrifice beneath;

Therefore away, Priest, forward to the Temple.

Sem. Help, help, you Gods.

Mith. All thought of help is vain.
Give me your beauteous hand, and willingly,
Or here are arms to bear you.

Sem. Let 'em be,
Call all your Armies hither to your aid,
I will not stir, nor give this trembling hand
To gain an Empire: thus, to th' Earth, I'll grow
One piece. O, root me here, some pitying God,
And let me lose my being, to escape him.

Mith. *Andravar*, raise her gently from the ground: [*They take*
Take help, and bring her softly to my Chariot. *her in their arms.*

Sem. Stay, *Mithridates*; hear me but one word;
One moments stay: ev'n Malefactors are
Allow'd to speak before their Execution;
And shall not I? I, who am Innocent?
'Tis not to thee, but to the Gods, I bow:
Behold; — but see, from you, from you they take me:
O save me thus by cruel men betray'd;
Revenge your selves, and right a Ravish'd Maid.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Mithridates *incompass'd with the Ghosts of his Sons, who see*
Daggers to his Breast, and vanish.

WHat Ho! *Pelopidas*! why, *Andravar*!
Haste to my help.

Enter Pelopidas, Andravar.

Pelop. What wou'd your Majesty?

Mith. I wou'd, what I must ne're expect on Earth,
The Peace I had. Come nearer. Oh, my Friends!
If Fate did e're foreshow a Doom in sleep,
Mine is at hand. Last night, you well remember,
I bore *Semandra* from the Thund'ring Gods,
Who shook the deep Foundations of the Temple.

With the reports of Wrath Divine ; yet I,
 This desperate wretch, through streets of fire, did bear her
 Back, in a Swoon, to my most inward Closet,
 But there you left me ; left me to the rage
 Of monstrous Love, which, in the midst of faintings,
 With Transports yet unheard-of, forc'd a Joy
 Whose momentary pleasures will heap on me
 Whole Worlds of Furies, Hells of endless Horror.

Pelop. But, Sir, the Dream, that may divert your cares.

Mith. Divert 'em! rather let me gather all my courage
 To Bulwark in my Soul. O plant me round
 With your kind Bodies ; blunt, if possible,
 Heav'n's whetted vengeance, while I tell the Vision.
 After the dreadful Extasie was over,
 The Ravish'd Maid, half-dead with shrieking pray'rs,
 Burst, at the last, from my relenting Arms,
 Ran to my Sword, of which when I disarm'd her,
 She fled the Room, with cries like one distracted.
 Preft with Remorse, I rested on my Couch,
 And slept ; but oh, a Dream so full of terror,
 The pale, the trembling midnight Ravisher
 Ne're saw, when cold *Lucyria's* Mourning-Shadow
 His Curtains drew, and lash'd him in the eyes,
 With her bright Tresses, dabbled in her blood.

Pelop. I have heard of Dreams that have prov'd Ominous ;
 But I cou'd never fix my Faith on Fancies.

Mith. Methought, by Heav'nly Order I was doom'd
 To seek my Fate alive in th' other World :
 Streight, like a Feather, I was borne by Winds,
 To a steep Promontory's top, from whence
 I saw the very Mouth of Op'ning Hell,
 Shooting so fast through the void Caves of night,
 I had not time to ponder of my passage.
 I shot the Lake of Oaths, where Fleeting Ghosts,
 Whose Bodies were unbury'd, beg'd for waftage.
 Then was I thro'wn down the Infernal Courts,
 Infinite fathom, till I soar'd again
 To the bright Heav'nly Plains, the happy Fields.
Andr. I wonder, that the brittle shroud of thought
 Shou'd hold in such a maze!

Mith. Oh, now it comes.
 After that Heav'nly Sounds had Charm'd my Ears,
 Methought I saw the Spirits of my Sons,
 Slain by my jealousie of their Ambition,
 Who shriek'd, He's come! our cruel Father's come!
 Arm, arm, they cry'd, through all th' enamell'd Grove:
 Streight had their cries alarm'd the wounded Host
 Of all those *Romans*, massacred in *Asia*:
 I heard the empty clank of their thin Arms,
 And tender voices cry'd, Lead, *Pompey*, lead.
 Streight they came on, with Chariots, Horse and Foot.
 When I had leisure to discern their Chief,
 Methought that *Pompey* was my Son *Ziphares*,
 Who cast his dreadful Pile, and pierc'd my heart:
 Then such a din of Death, Swords, Spears and Javelins,
 Clatter'd about me, that I wak'd with terrour,
 And found my self extended on the Floor.

Enter Pharnaces.

Phar. Arm, arm, Great *Mithridates*, the big War
 Comes with vast leaps, bounding o're all the *East*,
 Which crouches to the Torrent: *Pompey* comes;
Pompey the Great, saluted Emperour,
 And, for some years, destin'd to govern all
 Th' *Italian* Armies, with such full Commission,
 As yet was never granted to a *Roman*.
Pompey, so young, so soft, in shining Courts,
 That all the *Roman* Ladies languish for him:
Pompey, so fierce in Camps, so brave in Fields,
 The very Boys, like *Cupids*, dress'd in Arms,
 Clap their young harness'd thighs, and strut to Battel:
Pompey, *Rome's* Darling, and Fame's Eldest Son,
 Proclaims with *Mithridates* mortal War.

Mith. Were all well here, what force, what *Roman* Arms,
 What General, marching at the Head of Millions,
 Cou'd daunt the bold, the forward *Mithridates*?
 But here, *Pharnaces*, in my guilty Bosom,
 The fatal Foe does undermine my quiet;
 Black Legions, are my thoughts; not *Pompey*, but

Ziphares comes, with all his wrongs, for Arms,
Like the Lieutenant of the Gods, against me :

Semandra too, like bleeding Victory,
Stands on his side, and cries out, Kill, kill, kill
That curst Parricide, that Ravisher.

Oh Heav'n, sustain me, or I shall go mad.
My ugly guilt lies in my conscious face;
And I am vanquish'd, slain with Bosom-war.

Phar. 'Tis much beneath your Majesty, to alarm
Your self with fears.

Mith. Pharnaces, thou'rt ignorant !
Itell thee, Boy, remorse and upstart fear
Oppresses me, in spite of all my knowledge :
Tho none of those that boast Philosophy
Has made a deeper search in Nature's Womb
Than I ; (the mid-night Moon has seen my watchings) ;
Itell thee, none can name her infinite seeds
Like me ; nor better knows her sparks of light,
Those Gems that shine in the blew-Ring of Heav'n ;
None knows more Reasons for, or against yon' first
Bright Cause, can talk of accidents
Above me : yet I tell thee, once again,
There is a Thorn, call'd *Conscience*, makes its way
Through all the Fence of Pleasure, fortifi'd
With reasons, that this ill seem'd good to me,
And stings thy guilty Father to the Soul.

Pelop. After the fierceness of uncommon pleasure,
A sudden heaviness is natural.

Andr. Not but the fading Spirits will revive.

Mith. Never, oh never : nor did I enjoy
Expected pleasure, tho these hands did hold,
All night, her panting Beauties to my breast ;
But, oh ! what joy, what pleasure, what content,
Cou'd my griev'd-heart receive in ravish'd kindness !
Her lips, which if *Ziphares* had been there,
Wou'd sure have shot their gleamy warmth at distance,
Were cold to me, as Odours are in Frost :
Her face, like weeping Marble, damp'd my flames ;
And, as I drew her trembling to my Arms,
She fainted still, and woo'd me with such wailings,

Such languishings, and broken sighs, to leave her ;
That, had not more than monstrous appetite
Transported me, the Rose had been unblasted.

Phar. You think of her too much : the Sex of Women,
The ravish'd Beauties of the Earth together,
Deserve not half the grief that clouds your Brow.

Pelop. Your Subjects want you, to defend their lives ;
Each Citizen, in Armour clad, defends
His Household-Gods, standing to guard his door,
And cries, a Leader, let us to the Wars.

Mith. The Thunderbolt of *Mithridates* battel,
That tore the *Roman* Banners, now is lost :
My arm, my arm, ev'n my right arm is lost.
Nor will my Trumpets sound, without *Ziphares* :
His Breath was as the Air, to all the Army ;
His Face was as the Sun, in depth of Winter ;
And made cold Cowardablush away their fears ;
But he is set, for ever set in sorrow.

Andr. Your Majesty is, of your self, sufficient
To Head your eager Troops ; or brave *Pharnaces*
Stands forth, to fill *Ziphares* empty place.

Pelop. *Ziphares* still your Royal Favour had,
To improve himself in Arms, against the *Romans* ;
While, in inglorious Fields, *Pharnaces* strove
Amongst *Barbarians*, to get a Name :
And tho, perhaps, he greater pains employ'd,
In rooting up such Rubbish of the Earth,
Than th' other did in felling the tall Trees ;
Yet this was pay'd with Labour, that with Praise.

Mith. Peace, Villains ; peace, conspiring Sycophants :
Now, by the Gods, my eyes are half unseal'd ;
But, if the thought that kindles in my breast
Finds proper fuel to increase my fire,
It shall consume you, Traytors ; if I find
(Which I begin to do) that you have play'd
The Villain, *Andravar*, or thou *Pelopidas*,
And laid *Semandra's* Beauty as a snare
To catch *Ziphares* life, (Oh, all the Gods !)
And ruine me, by placing of the Bait :
Mark me, if ought of this, if any shadow

Appear, that you conspir'd to betray me ;
 I'll heap such horrors on your frightened Souls,
 That you shall call your Brother-Devils up,
 To snatch you hence, rather than stand my fury.

Pelop. Why shou'd your Majesty suspect your Servants?

Mith. Because thou did'st foment my fatal passion ;
 And, when I view thee well, my Genius bids
 Beware of thee : tho thy most subtil Devil
 Has wrought me still to listen to thy lies ;
 Thou art, methinks, maliciously contriv'd,
 And hast, if ever yet a Villain had,
 The Face of a most subtil working Slave.

Andr. We have done nought, but what your Royal Word
 Did Warrant : if you lov'd, shou'd we rebuke it ?
 Or durst we think to quench a fire, which you
 Resolv'd shou'd burn ?

Mith. Yes, Traytors, yes ; you ought,
 When you had seen me going, to have stopt me :
 My struggling Virtue might, with some assistance,
 Have cast the Venom of my Passion up ;
 But, with your poysonous breath, you made it rage,
 Till I was fit to ruine poor *Semandra*.

Enter Semandra.

But, oh ! behold the Innocence I wrong'd !

Sem. What, dost thou start ? Oh Heav'ns ! *Semandra* frights him !
 Why, what a Monster then must I appear,
 Whose Form can shake the bloody *Mithridates* !
 'Tis sure, thou hast undone this helpless Creature, [weeping.]
 And turn'd to mortal paleness all her Beauties,
 Thou hast made her hate the Day which once adorn'd
 Her op'ning Sweets : how wretched hast thou made me !
 Yet, Oh my Soul, thou inward knowledge, speak,
 How much I hate this violated Shrine.

Mith. Wretched *Semandra* !

Sem. Dost thou pity me ?
 Is the long Line of my Eternal grief
 Of such a Charming force, that it can fetch
 Tears from that Rock ? Ah, most unheard-of sorrow !

Dost thou repent? or are they but feign'd tears?
 What-e're they are, thou should'st have thought before,
 The cruel consequence of this dark deed;
 When I was heav'd in Air, and with my cries
 Pierc'd the deaf Heav'ns, and call'd to thee for mercy,
 Then had'st thou thus dissolv'd, I shou'd have blest thee:
 But now, thy black Repentance comes too late.
 What, Ah! what satisfaction canst thou make?

Mith. Instruct me.

Sem. No: there is in Nature none;
 Since I can never be *Ziphares* Bride.
 For if thou shou'dst consent to make us one,
 And Heav'n shou'd Warrant it; nay, tho *Ziphares*
 Extravagantly shou'd consent to take me,
 Ah, cou'd I meet those dear, those faithful arms,
 Which yet, in sleep, ne're touch'd a breast but mine,
 Thus wrong'd, and thus defil'd, thus nothing left,
 Of his *Semandra*, but her spotless mind!
 This is too much to think. Ah, cruel King!
 Now I cou'd curse, now I cou'd tear my self,
 Now I cou'd weep, as if 'twere possible
 To wash my stains out. Tell me, O you Pow'rs,
 For I'll be calm, was I not worth your care?
 And why, you Gods, was Virtue made to suffer?
 Unless this World be but as fire, to purge
 Her dross, that she may mount, and be a Star.
 Were this but certain; Ah, there's nothing sure,
 But my irrevocable Fate: undone *Semandra*! —
 This, this is certain, Death with loss of Honour.

[Exit.]

Mith. Farewel, *Semandra*, thou most wrong'd of Women.
 But I'll this instant go to *Monima*,
 And if I find what I suspect; *Pharnaces*,
 I'll cut thee off, as an infectious limb:
 And, for those Villains, I shall quickly know
 The wrong she has had; whose accus'd Innocence
 If your foul words have sully'd with black slander,
 Think not to scape, for shou'd you ride on Charms,
 Take Winds to bear you, or the Lightning's speed;
 With panting horror to the brink of Hell,
 I'd sweep you from the Verge to flames beneath.

And sink your Villanies with weighty death. [Exit.]

Phar. First, sink your self, your Crown and Love together.

Pelopidas, this comes of your cool counsel:

Had I been heard, *Monima* had been gone

By this, enjoy'd, and Crown'd my Royal Bride,

And we receiv'd, as Conquerors, by the *Romans*.

Hast thou not heard how when *Tygranus* came,

And cast his Diadem at *Pompey's* feet,

He call'd him King, and rais'd him by that Name

To sit as Equal to the *Roman Consul*?

By all the Gods, I will not stay a moment,

But take immediately my flight; except

You swear to side with *Rome*; call *Pompey* hither;

And haste with all the Forces we can make,

To joyn his Army, and betray my Father.

Pelop. A sudden thought of lucky mischief comes;

Old *Archelaus* is arriv'd; but left

The labour'd Army some few furlongs hence;

You know the violent love the Souldiers bear

The Prince your Brother; and we know too well,

And so do all the murmuring Citizens,

How cruelly your Father lately us'd him:

But that great Mole, the Multitude, ne're sees

Who works their Prince, but still take all on trust;

Therefore I instantly will spread amongst 'em,

How *Archelaus* was Conspirator

Against the Prince, and finding more advantage

To have the King his Son-in-law, by Letters

Basely compell'd his Daughter to the Marriage.

Phar. Millions to one but this will set 'em on

To tear curst *Archelaus*, like mad Dogs.

Besides, I find, by frequent murmures, how

His Subjects are quite tir'd with length of War;

And, but last night, I know no less than twelve,

All Captains, who conspir'd to take the part

Of *Pompey*, and intreated me to Head 'em.

Andr. Pursue the Treason, and be sure it cool not;

While I, with *Tripho*, hasten to the Army;

A Priest will colour well our enterprise.

There will we give out all that Treachery.

Can raise to fire 'em ; how the King has doom'd
The Prince to death, having first ravish'd from him
The Fair *Semandra*, for whose sake he dies.

Phar. While I immediately to *Pompey* send,
Who comes, I hear, on hasty march, to fight
Our Army, and besiege us in our Walls.

Pelop. Thus shall the Prince and I rule all within ;
And you, with the High-Priest my Brother, play
Your Parts without.

Phar. I long to be in action :
And sure *Rome* must, for the great overthrow,
Give me my Father's Crowns ; which gratitude
Shall distribute to both your utmost wishes.

Pelop. We must not doubt your bounty. — But, away ;

Enter Ziphares ; with Ismenes, at distance.

Your melancholy Brother may o're-hear us. *Ex. Phar. Pelop. Andr.*

Ziph. Oh, my hard Fate ! why did I trust her ever ?
What Story is not full of Womans falshood !
The Sex is all a Sea of wide destruction :
We are the vent'rous Barks that leave our home,
For those sure dangers which their smiles conceal :
At first, they draw us in with flatt'ring looks
Of Summer-Calms, and a soft gale of Sighs :
Sometimes, like *Syrens*, Charm us with their Songs,
Dance on the Waves, and show their Golden Locks :
But, when the Tempest comes, then, then they leave us,
Or rather, help the new Calamity,
And the whole Storm is one injurious Woman.
The Lightning follow'd with a Thunder-bolt
Is Marble-hearted Woman : all the Shelves
The faithless Winds, blind Rocks, and sinking Sands,
Are Women all ; the wracks of wretched men.
Prithee, Ismenes, while I lay me here,
Charm me with some sad Song into a slumber.

SONG ;

SONG; by Sir Car Scroop.

1.
O Ne night, when all the Village slept,
 Myrtillo's sad despair,
 The wand'ring Shepherd waking kept,
 To tell the Woods his care.

2.
 Be gone, said he, fond thought, be gone;
 Eyes, give your sorrows o're:
 Why shou'd you waste your tears for one
 That thinks on you no more?

3.
 Yet all the Birds, the Flocks, and Pow'rs,
 That dwell within this Grove,
 Can tell how many tender hours
 We here have pass'd in Love.

4.
 Yon' Stars above (my cruel Foes)
 Have heard how she has sworn
 A thousand times, that like to those,
 Her Flame shou'd ever burn.

5.
 But, since she's lost, Oh! let me have
 My wish, and quickly dye:
 In this cold Bank I'll make a Grave,
 And there for ever lye.

6.
 Sad Nightingales the watch shall keep,
 And kindly here complain:
 Then down the Shepherd lay to sleep,
 But never wak'd again.

Enter Archelaus.

Arch. How now, Ismenes? Prithee, gentle Boy,
 Instruct me where to find thy Royal Master.

What dost thou weep? I charge thee bring me to him.

Isme. See there, my Lord.

Arch. Bless me, you Heav'nly Pow'rs,
Upon the Earth! It cannot be thy Master.

Is that a posture for a Conqueror?

He who so bravely beat the *Romans* back?

A General, and Triumpher? Hasten, and show me.

Isme. By Heav'n, it's true, my Lord; there lies the Prince.

Arch. Something my heart presag'd, when, having left

The Army, I came posting to the Court,

And scarce receiv'd a welcom from my Friends;

They said the Prince had Triumph'd, but I saw

Not the least track of such a Glory left,

No glimmering twilight of so full an Honour.

There has been foul play, and I'll find it out.

Ziph. Away, *Semandra*, cruel Woman, leave me.

Arch. Ha! goes it there? *Ziphares*, Prince, arise.

Ziph. Ha! who is there? old *Archelaus*?

Arch. Why

Do I not see you in a Chariot,

With all the Pride of *Asia's* brightest Gems?

Why mount you not the Throne which you deserve,

The Lords of *Colchis* waiting as your Slaves?

Give me some reason why I see you thus.

Ziph. Alas, he had no hand in her revolt,

Nor knows not yet, perhaps, how she has us'd me:

Why do I seem thus strange then? — Oh, *Archelaus*,

(For I must never call thee Father more)

Pardon my faulty carriage.

Arch. Forbear these strict imbraces,

Your tears, your hanging on my Bosom thus;

Your sighs reduce my Age to sobbing Childhood,

And make an Infant of your poor Old Man.

Ziph. Did I not say I never more must call

Thee Father?

Arch. Yes, you did.

Ziph. Fond, foolish sorrow!

Thou art, thou shalt, thou must be still my Father,

My Brother, Sister, Mistress, all, my Friend;

For all but thou have left me; no kind eye

Pities the sufferings of abus'd *Ziphares*;

They fly, all fly from my infectious Fortune.

Arch. Nay, good dear Prince, stand up; you smother all
Your words with groans: dry up this womanish grief,
And speak, dear Sir, declare the curst cause,
The baleful Spring, the Source of all this mischief.

Ziph. VVou'd you believe it? scarce can I my self,
Oh Heav'ns, and oh you ever-burning Lights,
Who have beheld at midnight from your Orbs
Our flames, that kindled bright and chaste as yours,
Which of you all, which most malignant Star,
Show me that envious Fire that crost our loves,
That I may curse him from his fatal Sphere.

Arch. Name it, I say, the ground of all this trouble;
I feel a warm revenge run through my blood,
As if I had put off some forty year:
Methinks I stand as fit to fight the Cause
Of Friendship now, as then I cou'd my Love's,
But speak.

Ziph. Thy Daughter.

Arch. Well, I guess'd fate wounded there.

Ziph. *Semandra*, my most fair, dear, gentle Mistress.

Arch. If she be false, she is no longer fair.

Ziph. That sweet protesting Creature, that pure whiteness,
Where I so deep had writ my Vows in blood,
Is taken from me,

Arch. By her own consent?

Ziph. Most certain. That Eternal Bond of Oaths,
Committed to her keeping, now is Cancell'd:
Ev'n her fair Hand, the Seal of all my Love,
Her Hand has given her faithless Heart away.

Arch. Then, she is false? you know her to be so?

Ziph. False, false, as waters, winds, or wand'ring fires:
She is more false than Woman can believe.

Arch. The opening of her treachery, come, how was't?
Particular revenge wou'd know particulars.
At first, I guess'd she did receive you kindly.

Ziph. Quite contrary, as if she ne've had seen me;
Quite alter'd, quite estrang'd, reserv'd and cold,
With all the coyness of a base-born Beauty,
Made proud with Pow'r: not one tender look
The very Accent of her Voice was chang'd.

King of PONTUS.

59

Nor was she to be known, but by her Beauty,
Nought else cou'd speak her to my Sense the same,
O nothing but the Face of my *Semandra*;

Arch. When my keen Sword shall glitter in her eyes,
Doubt not, but I shall make her know you well;
And, tho you never grace her with your favour,
For she is now unworthy your embraces,
Yet I will bring the Traytress to your knees.

Ziph. Can it be
Thou shou'dst be ignorant, she's past the giving?

Arch. I have not met the news, which your swollen eyes
Appear so big with.

Ziph. Here I am lost again;
Here all my courage, which has born the blow
Of sternest War, shrinks like a beaten Coward:
Here, I confess, my Piety gives way,
I cou'd fall out with the forgetful Gods,
And curse the cruel Author of my Being.
No, Tyrant, no, thou bloody Parent, think not
That I will bear it longer; I'll forget,
Like thee, all nature, all remorse, all pity,
And snatch her from thee, wedded as you are.

Arch. What, Wedded! Marri'd!

Ziph. Wedded, Marri'd, Bedded;
He has enjoy'd her, rifled that fair Casket
Where all the riches of my life were laid:
Yes, yes, you Gods, I saw 'em pass along,
Pass to the Temple, through the crouded Streets,
Saw 'em come back, darted my wishing eyes
At her false Face, with such accusing glances,
She fainted in the Chariot; yes, I saw her
Sink pale, and dying down; but there I lost her,
And left her to the Revels of the Night,
To be enjoy'd, ev'n this last night enjoy'd.

Arch. By all the Honours which she has dishonour'd,
She shall not live another.

Ziph. Oh my Father!
Cou'd you but guess the pains that I endur'd,
Oh all the subtillest fits of sharpest sickness,
Were nothing to the torments which I bore:

I t'w'd ev'n their disrobing kisses, smiles,
 The first imbraces, and the racking joy;
 But there methought Fancy it self was stopt,
 It cou'd no more. The limit of my life
 Was found, the end of all my joys on Earth.

Arch. She dies; not Destiny shall save her from me:
 As she has sworn, and as she has forsworn,
 I'll draw my Sword, bath'd in her dearest blood;
 From forth her Heart-strings, while the rank red VVeeds
 Cling to my reeking Blade: or wou'd you more?
 I am grown up to your anger.

Ziph. General, hold:
 I have been Impious in my vented rage;
 For which, oh pardon me, my Royal Father,
 And you most injur'd Pow'rs, whom I offended:
 And, oh, what-ever shall become of me,
 Forgive the fair, the false, the lov'd *Semandra*.
 If while I live thou mark her gentle Limbs
 With the least wound, it ends *Ziphares* life:
 Or if thou hurt her after I am dead,
 Thou'lt raise my Ashes up in Arms against thee.

Isme. My Lord, the Queen *Semandra*'s coming hither.

Ziph. Say'st thou?

Isme. The Queen——But see, she enters.

Ziph. Ha!

Enter Semandra.

Sem. Oh *Ziphares*! Oh Prince! Oh thou most wrong'd!

Ziph. How can this be? Madam, you ought at least
 To have sent me word; for now, instead of Songs,
 I can present you nothing but my tears,
 A beating heart, and groans that will not suit
 VVith your most happy state, your blest condition.

Sem. Ah, did you rightly understand my sufferings,
 You wou'd not wound a bleeding, dying Creature:
 But I'll endure yet more. VVhen I am dead,
 And 'tis too late, you'll murmur to your self,
 At least I might have heard what the poor VVretch
 Cou'd say.

Arch. Oh Syren ! but I will be hush'd.

[*Aside.*

Ziph. VVhat canst thou say, if I resolve to hear thee ?
Thou wilt but tear the wounds which thou hast made.
This Visit was most cruel : why com'st thou then ;
For fear I shou'd forget thee ? Merciless VVoman !

Arch. Yet let us hear her, Prince ; let's hear the Sorceress ;
That when sure Vengeance overtakes her Crimes,
She may have nought to answer.

Sem. The good Gods
Reward that Voice of Mercy, First then, my Lord.

Ziph. No ; I'll be gone : Fly, *Archelaus*, fly,
She has a Tongue that can undo the VVorld.
She eyes me, just as when she first inflam'd me,
Such were her looks, so melting was her language,
Such false soft sighs, and such deluding tears,
VVhen from her lips I took the luscious poyson,
VVhen with that pleasing perjur'd breath avowing,
Her whispers trembl'd through these credulous ears,
And told the story of my utter ruine.

Arch. Nay, 'tis impossible to clear her self ;
And it was Impudence to offer at it :
Therefore, thou shameless Off-spring of my Blood,
I'll cut thee from me, thus, with all thy Crimes,
Die, as thou did'st desire.

{ *Half-drawing :*
 scapt by Ziph.

Ziph. Hold thy hand ;
I charge thee touch her not.

Arch. By Heav'n, she dies :
I may dispose my own ; she shall not live.

Ziph. By all the Gods, she shall, while I have breath :
And, if thou draw'st, I'll guard her life with mine.
I shou'd be loth to lift my Arm 'gainst thee
Of all Mankind ; but, were my Father here
Resolv'd to give her Death, I wou'd oppose him.

Sem. Draw then, and sheath your weapons in my breast,
In curst *Semandra's* Heart ; but for the VVorld,
Oh Father, do not wound the Prince *Ziphares* :
And, oh *Ziphares*, do not hurt my Father !
Upon my knees, I beg you to be calm,
And hear me thus.

Ziph. Oh rise ! false, as thou art,

Thou once wert Empress of my Soul, and I
 Still drag thy Chains: Speak then, *Semandra*, speak;
 For I'm so doz'd, so weary with complaining,
 That I cou'd stand and listen to the VVinds,
 And think that VVomen talk'd: observe the Rain,
 And think that VVomen wept; or in the Clouds
 Behold *Semandra's* Form, still fleeing from me.
 But, speak: I lose my Senses with my Woes.

Arch. He has sav'd thy life; come, make a handfom lye
 In recompence.

Sem. I will be short, as true.
 When you were gone to Wars, the King relaps'd;
 How prompted, Heav'n best knows: and when with Conquest
 You came from Battel, he with dreadful threats
 Compell'd me to receive you in that manner.

Ziph. Ah, cruel Creature! what, what Menaces,
 What fear of death, cou'd so have made *Ziphares*
 Receive *Semandra*?

Sem. Not Racks, nor all the Tortures
 Which Hell combin'd cou'd put into the hearts
 Of bloodiest Tyrant, shou'd have forc'd me to't,
 But, oh! your life, which he with deepest Oaths
 Had sworn to take, unless I seem'd to scorn you;
 That dash'd my Spirits, baffled all the daring
 Of my defenceless heart: there I confess
 The Woman work'd; I trembled and agreed
 To see you so, rather than lose you ever.

Arch. Now, by my Arms, she has come off with wonder!

Sem. And think, my Lord, reflect upon your self;
 I dare believe so dearly once you lov'd me,
 That were you certain I shou'd lose my life,
 Unless you us'd me in that very manner,
 I know you wou'd constrain your flame awhile,
 And seem as cold, and as reserv'd as I.

Ziph. Oh heart! oh bleeding Love! but speaks *Semandra*,
 For there is wondrous Reason, mighty Sense
 In what you say: and I cou'd hear you ever.

Sem. When you were gone, the cruel King came in,
 And, without stop, propos'd the fatal Marriage,
 Which being deny'd, he forc'd me to the Temple.

Yet, at the Altar, I deni'd my hand,
 Invok'd the Gods with the most violent sorrow,
 Tears, sighs, and swoonings ; curst the-frighted Priests,
 Struck down the Cenfors, and like one distracted
 I mangled my own flesh ; but all in vain :
 I was suppos'd his Queen, and so enjoy'd.

Ziph. Then still thy heart, thy heart was mine, *Semandra* ?

sem. It was, it is, for ever shall be yours.

Ziph. Oh, at thy feet, let me for ever lye,
 Thus hang upon thy knees with dying grasps,
 Thou most wrong'd Innocence, abus'd *Semandra*.

sem. Oh, my dear Lord, you shall not kneel without me.

Ziph. Thou art not false then!

sem. Cou'd you think me so?

False to my Life, my Soul, my All I have !

Ziph. I did ; I thought thee false, and I deserve
 To die, for wronging thy most matchless Faith :
 For thou art true, constant as pining Turtles,
 Constant, as Courage to the Brave in Battel,
 Constant as Martyrs, burning for the Gods.

Arch. What Changes drive business of the World !
 Come, no more weeping : rise,
 Think on the King, if he shou'd take you thus.

Ziph. Oh rise, *Semandra* ; what, what are we doing ?
 Why, *Archelaus*, why did'st thou cut me off
 The moments pleasure which my thoughts were forming ?
 Thy cruel breath quite broke the brittle Glafs
 Of my short life, and stopt the running Sand.
 What shall we do, *Semandra* ?

sem. Part, and die.

Ziph. Die, 'tis resolv'd ; but how ? that, that must be
 My future care : and with that thought I leave thee.
 Go then, thou Setting-star ; take from these eyes,
 (These eyes, that if they see thee, will be wishing)
 O take those languishing pale fires away,
 And leave me to the wide, dark Den of Death !

sem. Something within me sobs to my boding heart,
Semandra ne'er shall see *Ziphares* more.

Ziph. Away then ; part, for ever part, *Semandra* :
 Let me alone sustain those rav'nous Fates,

Which, like two famish'd Tygers, are gone out,
 And have us in the Wind. Death come upon me ;
 Night, and the bloodi'st deed of darkness, end me.
 But, oh, for thee, for thee, if thou must die,
 I beg of Heav'n this last, this only favour,
 To give thy life a painless dissolution :
 Oh, may those ravish'd Beauties fall to Earth
 Gently, as wither'd Roses leave their Stalks :
 May Death be mild to thee, as Love was cruel ;
 Calm, as the Spirits in a Trance decay :
 And soft, as those who sleep their Souls away.

[Exeunt.]

ACT V. SCENE I.

Pelopidas, Andravar, *Priest, incompass'd with Romans.*

Pelop. **R**omans, who send your Laws far as the Sun
 His Beams, and whom the Universe beholds
 With joy, yet dreads your anger as the Gods,
 Why move you to the ruine of this Tyrant,
 To the sure death of bloody *Mithridates*,
 As if you fear'd, or car'd not he shou'd die ?
 Can you suspect an Ambush ? or that we
 Shou'd dare betray you, yielding thus our persons,
 Our Lives, our Prince himself into your hands ?

Andr. This man, to whom the servile Priests bow down,
 Who wears a Crown in honour of his place,
 And sacred worth, abandons all his glories
 T' attest the truth of what we have declar'd.

Enter Pharnaces.

But see, the fierce, the brave, the Great *Pharnaces*
 Comes on to meet you ; waves his Royalties :
 Therefore, O mighty *Romans*, give him Audience.

Phar. That I am rough, and of an untaught Spirit,
 All the *East* knows ; I ever scorn'd those Slaves
 With whom I have been bred ; and when my Father

Order'd *Barbarian* Princes for my Masters,
 In Arts and Arms, I spurn'd 'em from my presence ;
 And rather chose, since *Rome* might not instruct me,
 Nature in all my Actions for my Guide.
 Hence cou'd I brook more hardly the fierce mind
 Of our Inhumane Parent *Mithridates*.
 My Eldest Brother's Fate did kindle first
 My fiery Soul to a most swift revenge ;
 For when the State of *Bosphorus* demanded
 That Prince for King, he bound the gallant Youth
 In Golden Chains, and doom'd him to be slain :
 Two more were by his boundless fury strangled ;
 And ev'n the last but me, the brave *Ziphares*,
 Last night was murder'd in the Tyrants Palace :
 In whose sad cause, the Squadrons which he led
 Of late so valiantly against you *Romans*,
 Attend some furlongs hence to joyn your Banners.
 If this be true, not to recount the Slaughters
 Of all his Queens and poyson'd Concubines,
 I think the World (*Rome* I shou'd first have nam'd)
 Will little censure this so just revolt.
 If you suspect me false, behold *Pharnaces*,
 Ne're yet detain'd, but free as roving Lyons
 That swept at will like Winds in Deserts wild ;
 Behold him, with these Noble Hostages,
 Your Pris'ner to be bound the Slave of *Rome*.

Rom. Capt. Lead us on to Victory.

Omnes. To Victory.

Phar. On then, you Race of Heav'n, you Seed of Gods ;
 And to Immortalize *Pharnaces* Name,
 Plant me, like Thunder breaking from this Cloud,
 Foremost, while all the ratling Engines follow.
Monima, whom this Tyrant ravish'd from me,
 I hear is fled to *Pompey* : her I ask,
 For my reward, with half his spreading Empire,
 But I waste words ; let's act, and then make claim.
 And O remember, when we storm the Town,
 Remember that most horrid Massacre
 Of *Asia* ; whet on that your blunted Spirits,
 Till with the motion Lightnin edge your Souls

To mow off hoary Heads, hurl Infants pining
 From the lug'd breast, kill in the very Womb:
 To Beauties cries be deaf, make all *Synope*
 But one vast Grave, to hold the infinite bodies
 Which we must shovel in; and when you see
 The Head of *Mithridates* in this hand,
 Then think who ever dar'd for *Rome* like me,
 Or bought an Empire at a price so dreadful:
 Then yield the Beauty I so much desire,
 And all those Crowns to which my thoughts aspire.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

Enter Ziphaxes, Archelaus.

Ziph. 'Tis late; the gath'ring Clouds, like meeting Armies,
 Come on apace, and Mortals now must die,
 Till the bright Ruler of the rising Day
 Creates 'em new: the wakeful Bird of Night
 Claps her dark wings to th' Windows of the dying
 General, Good-night.

Arch. Sir, I'll not leave you yet.
 I do not like the dusky boding Eve:
 Well I remember, Sir, how you and I
 Have often on the Watch in Winter walk'd,
 Clad in cold Armor, round the sleeping Camp,
 Till cover'd o're from head to foot with Snow,
 The Centinels have started at our march,
 And thought us Ghosts talking in Winding-sheets:
 And do you think I cannot watch you now,
 Thus cover'd, and beneath this bounteous Roof?
 Sleep, Sir; I'll guard you from suspected danger.

Ziph. Danger! there's none; no shadow of a harm:
 Dear General, you'll oblige me to retire:
 We'll meet to morrow with the earliest dawn;
 I'm troubled now, and heavy, in the morning,
 Soon as you please, you shall have entrance here;
 And then, I trust the bounteous Gods, you'll find
 A wondrous alteration. Sleep may Charm
 My talking griefs, and hush 'em fast forever.

Arch. 'Tis that I fear,—I tell you there are Deaths
Brooding this night abroad. A Recluse Priest,
Surpriz'd with mortal sickness, was this Evening,
As he himself desir'd, ta'n from his Bed,
And carry'd to the Closet of the King :
Where, after some close conference, he expir'd.
Immediately your Father Orders gave
For doubling all his Guards, and went in fury
To *Monima's* Apartment, where 'twas said
Pharnaces had been gone a while before.

Ziph. I ever thought that Brother most ambitious ;
But what is this to me ?

Arch. What follow'd does
Concern both you and me, and all the *East* ;
For streight, when the sick Priest had breath'd his last,
The sacred Oyl, which for a hundred years
Supply'd the Sun behind the Golden Vail,
Went out, and all the mystick lights were quench'd :
Strange doleful Voices shrilly eccho'd through
The darkned Fane ; the Monuments did open,
And all the Marble Tombs, like Sponges squeez'd,
Spouted big Sweat : the Curtain was consum'd
With wondrous flame ; and every shining Altar
Dissolv'd to yellow puddle, which anon
A flash of thirsty Lightning quite lick'd up.
While through the Streets your murder'd Brothers rode,
Arcathias, Mithridates, and Machares,
And madd'd all the screaming multitude.
Is not this strange ?

Ziph. The Gods reproach my slackness. [Aside.]
'Tis strange ! most wondrous strange ! Once more I pray thee
By all our Friendship, leave me to my self.

Arch. Ah, Prince, you cannot hide
Your purpose, from your narrow-searching Friend :
I find it, by the sinking of your Spirits,
Your hollow speech, deep musings, eager looks,
Whose fatal longings quite devour their objects,
You have decreed, by all the Gods you have,
This night to end your Noble Life.

Ziph. Away.

I never thought thee troublesome till now.

Arch. I care not ; spite of all that you can do,
I'll stay, and weep you into gentleness :
Your faithful Souldier, this old doting Fool
Shall be more troublesome than one that's wiser.
By Heav'n, you shall not hurt your precious life.
I'll stay and wait you, wake here till I die ;
Follow you, as a fond and fearful Father
Wou'd watch a desperate Child.

Ziph. I'll tell thee then,
Since thou wilt tear the Secret from my breast,
And dive into the bottom of my Soul,
This night must end me : make not a reply ;
'Tis fix'd as fast and sure as are my woes.
Did'st thou but know what 'tis to love like me,
And to be so belov'd ; O *Archelaus* !
Yet to be past all hope of happiness,
Of ever tasting those desir'd Beauties,
Of any dawn, least glimpse, or spark of comfort,
Did'st thou not hate me much, even thou wou'dst kill me.

Arch. If that my death, (for that indeed's but little)
Cannot once move you from this dreadful deed,
Yet, Prince, your Country, which must fall without you,
Your bleeding Country must obtain at least
That you wou'd live to free her from her Foes ;
Your Glory calls, your sinking Father begs,
That you wou'd save your Country from the *Romans*.

Ziph. Much I indeed have got by Conquering *Rome* !
And to much purpose lost my dearest blood !
Much have my wounds deserv'd ; and Heav'n can tell
How Nobly I have been rewarded for 'em !
I tell thee, *Archelaus*, I have sworn,
Were I to live, I wou'd not fight again :
The World shou'd neither better be, nor worse
For me. But I waste time ; and to convince thee,
Since thou wilt have the trouble to behold
My death, I bid thee now farewell for ever.

Arch. Hold, Sir.

Ziph. I will ; and talk as calmly to thee
As any dying *Roman* of 'em all : •

I have consider'd well of what I do,
And I will perish with as little noise
As Fate cou'd wish that wou'd not be accus'd.

Arch. I'll follow you.

Ziph. I wou'd intreat thee not ;
Thou hast no sorrows that are past the sufferance :
And sure my flying Soul will hang her wing,
When she shall feel thy weighty death upon her.

O, *Archelaus*, leave me to my Fate ;
If thou must see me fall, I charge thee live,
At least so long to tell *Semandra* of me :
Bear her some Token of my ill-star'd Love,
Which Empire cou'd not win to live without her.
Dip in the blood which trickles from my heart
Thy Handkerchief, and bid her keep it for me,
As a Remembrance now and then to mourn me :
Swear to do this.

Arch. This I will do ; and, mark me, cruel Prince,
If thus thou violate that Royal Frame,
Tearing the gallant Spirit from his Mansion,
I swear by what I tremble at, thy death,
I'll double all thy wounds upon *Semandra*.

Ziph. Ha !

Arch. I'll tear her piece-meal, and so hack her limbs,
Thou shalt not know her in the other World.

Ziph. Oh torture ! dear, good *Archelaus*, hold ;
I know thou canst not mean such cruelty.
Why dost thou rack me thus, with thoughts in death
That are much heavier ev'n than death it self ?
Why dost thou make my eyes thus swim in tears ?
I charge thee, do not hurt her ; for the sake
Of all the Gods, be gentle to my Love :
I beg for mercy to the soft *Semandra*.

Alas, if she deserv'd, as she is faultless,
She cou'd not bear the wounds which we can bear.

Arch. Give me your promise then that you will live :
Live but this night, or I have sworn her death.

Ziph. Thou hast found the means to Charm me into life,
And keep me on the Rack ; but no more threats
Against *Semandra* : 'twas unkindly done,

And I grow angry at my Fates delay.

Arch. Why will you be thus forward? Live to night;
Be careful of your self but till the Morn:
Methinks there may be wonders wrought e're then.

Ziph. O *Archelaus*! 'tis impossible:
Had she been Ravish'd by another Man,
I cou'd have clear'd her with the Villains Blood;
But by my Father touch'd, what Miracle
Can work me into hope? Heav'n here is Bankrupt;
The wondring Gods blush at their want of pow'r,
And, quite abash'd, confess they cannot help me.

Arch. Sure, by yon lifted Torches, I discern
Your Father moving this way.

Ziph. Ha! my Father!
How my flesh trembles! I cou'd do a deed
Wou'd make us both run mad. Draw, *Archelaus*,
Yet stay: what Devil starts thus in my blood,
And turns my Reason to this maze of folly?
No; let us suffer more, if possible:
Yet I will shun his Presence. Oh you Pow'rs,
Is that a Crime? answer me if it be,
And I will meet him, tho his sight should blast me. [Exeunt as

Mithridates, Captain of the Guards, and Attendants enter.

Mith. Betray'd! and by my Son! given up a Prey
For the Insulting Romans to devour!

Pharnaces is the Traytor, that Pharnaces

Who was t' inherit all that space of Empire
Which Fortune gave to this unhappy King!

O Friends, when from the Palace-gate we sall'y'd,

And drove the bold Assailants through the City,

The Impious Boy Charg'd as I foremost rode,

And brav'd my Fury with his Bever up;

But, Oh the Gods, I who before had crimson'd

My Arms with Blood of Rebels, I who mov'd

With Whirlwinds swiftness still on every side,

And tost like Leaves the weightiest Foes about me,

Now stood, as if *Gorgonian* Charms had fixt me:

Nor know I more.

Capt. Your Sword, Great Sir, when you
A while had gaz'd on that Audacious Prince,
Fell from your hand, your mighty Spirit left you ;
And as some famous piece of Antick work,
When the sunk Props and wasted Beams decay,
Staggers and nods before the ruine comes :
So wav'd your Royal Fabrick e're it fell ;
And, as our Arms receiv'd you, curs'd *Pharnaces*,
Born by Ambition to a murder new ;
Offer'd a wound, and 'twas with great expence
Of lives, we bore your Body to the Palace.

Mith. My Senses blaze ; my last I know is come ;
My last of hours : 'tis wondrous horrid ! now
My lawless love, and boundless pow'r reproach me.
But I will think no more on't. Come, my Friends,
Let's meet these *Romans*, and my Rebel-Son ;
Let's kill till we are weary, then lye down
And rest for ever : O 'tis Noble Ruine !
Creatures of vilest make, upon disgust
With Knives or Cords set loose their Coward Souls ;
But we will live in spite to grieve the World,
While life will last, or any Spirits hold.
O that, like Serpents hewn, we still might move,
Our Limbs lopt off, and kill with every parcel !

Enter Semandra.

Sem. 'Tis done ; my Ruine is at last reveng'd,
And cruel *Mithridates* is no more :
That famous wicked man shall kill no more :
Faln is the Murderer, he shall love no more
Another's right ; shall Ravish now no more.

Mith. O horror ! snatch me, Furies, from her presence :
Gape wide, O Earth, and swallow me alive.

Sem. I go before, and never shall we meet
On Earth again, inhumane *Mithridates* ;
Yet I rejoyce not, be my Witness Heav'n,
At those Calamities that come upon thee :
But think 'em just, and with a dread reflection
Behold thy Fate, and wonder at the Gods.

Not but thy Son, my Love, my lost *Ziphares*,
 And I, in lamentable Shapes, made up
 By Death's own hand, will tell 'em all thy Story.
 For ever thus, thou Ravisher of Honour,
 I leave thee to the Vultures of thy Conscience,
 To all the Stings Ambition feels in death,
 Or Lust, the Rape committed. O, you Pow'rs
 Make firm my hand, for an Exploit, to Crown
 My Life, whose bus'ness shall be quickly done. [Exit.

Mith. Away, to Arms, to Arms; plunge deep in blood:
 Be quick to die. Were all the *Roman* Piles,
 And *Scythian* Darts, and *Parthia's* poyson'd Arrows,
 Shot through this Body, her words wou'd be more,
 I'll not endure 't; rush to the fatal War:
 I wou'd be drunk with Death, and steaming Slaughter,
 To stupifie the sense of inward torment.
 Haste then, and wallow in the murd'ring Field,
 Through all the Avenues to battel flie:
 They who have liv'd in blood, in blood must die. [Exeunt.

Trumpets. Enter *Pelopidas*, *Andravar*, their Swords
 drawn, with a Lamp.

Pelop. Yonder he Sallies, furious for Destructions,
 And now full scope is given to act our bus'ness,
 And end the sad *Ziphares*.

Andr. I am glad
 The chance is fall to us: to death, nay more,
 To Hell I hate him, and to have him slain
 By any hand but mine, wou'd pall the Murder.

Pelop. The Palace now is drawn
 Of all the glitt'ring Host that twinkled here,
 Following their King, to shoot the Gulph of Ruine:
 And it was order'd well, by Prince *Pharnaces*,
 While with the *Romans* he dispatch'd his Father,
 That we shou'd kill his drooping Brother. Ha!
 I hear some tread! your Lamp must wink awhile.

Enter Ziphares.

Ziph. Oh, 'tis too much ; I never shall sleep more.
How loud the Voice of Fate sounds every-where !
Trumpets and Drums ! yet old *Archelaus*,
With grief and watching spent, in spite of all
Those Tides of Care that swell'd e're-while so high,
Lies like a Child that braul'd himself asleep.

Ismenes too, that wept to see me mourn,
Falls on his breast, and nods his tears away :
So sleeps the Sea-boy on the Cloudy Mast,
Safe, as a drowzy *Tryton*, rock'd with Storms,
While tossing Princes wake on Beds of Down.

Pelop. 'Tis he ; prepare.

Andr. Both perish, if he escape.

Ziph. This darkness fills my breast with horror : now,
Now I may do the deed ; which done, all's sure :
It shall be so, and thus I will deceive him.
But then he kills *Semandra*. Whence this light ?
Swords ! Vizors ! what Assassins are these ?
Wou'd they were more ; for ruine is my wish :
Yet I disdain to fall by Villains hands.

[Beats 'em off.]

Enter Semandra, with a Dagger in her hand.

Sem. Where do I wander in the dismal Shades
Of this black night ? there's not a Soul beneath
Who dy'd as I must do, for fatal Love,
Knows better all the gloomy Arbours there,
Than I each Chamber in this House of Death.
'Twas here the God-like Prince did woo'd me first,
Sigh'd his first Vows, and wept me into passion :
Where shall I find him, that most perfect Soul ?
Whose whiteness will to after-ages answer
For all the spotted loves of perjur'd men.
Meet him I must, and run into his arms ;
But with a *Roman* blow, which first shall drive
This Ponyard to my heart : then, rush upon him,
Then clasp him close, then he'll believe me true.

Enter Ziphares.

Ziph. This way the Cowards fly ; this way the noise goes.
I think thou hast it there, and canst not scape me.

Sem. I thank the Gods, I shall not. Let me kiss
The hand that kills me. Oh too gracious Heav'n!
Semandra now is happy.

Ziph. *Semandra* ! what,
What say'st thou ? Speak again, thou dismal voice.

Sem. Oh, that I cou'd see your face before I die:
Those eyes, where I wou'd look my Soul away.

Ziph. Awake ; what ho, *Ismenes* ! haste, a light !
Haste hither, Father, *Archelaus*, haste !
My heart bodes ruine, we are all undone.

Enter Archelaus, and Ismenes with a Light.

Oh, Father, either I am Charm'd, or here
Semandra lies, slain by this dreadful hand,

Arch. Our Guardian-spirits shield us, 'tis my Daughter.

Ziph. Curs'd Fate ! malicious Stars ! you now have drain'd
Your selves of all your poyf'rous influence ;
Ev'n the last baleful drop is shed upon me.

Sem. Give me thy hand most matchless of thy kind ;
O joyn us, Father, joyn us thus in death :
Now thou art mine ; and we'll be wedded too
In th' other World ; our Souls shall there be mixt :
Who knows, but there our joys may be compleat ?
A happy Father, thou, and I, perhaps,
The smiling Mother of some little Gods.

Ziph. Oh *Archelaus*, if thou lov'st her memory,
Fly to the King, and let him understand
The truth of all : if he be pleas'd to hear her,
Intreat him haste, the pangs of death are on her.

Arch. I will, if tears will let me, find the way :
And, by your leave, these Weapons shall be mine.

Ziph. That I expected. Ha ! she faints, *Ismenes* !
Run to my Closet, haste, where thou wilt find
A Golden Vial of rich Juice, to bring the Spirits.

Back to their Seat : go, pour it in a Bole
With speed, to save her.

[Exit Ismenes.]

Hast thou not a word,
A syllable, fair Soul ? Speak, speak, *Semandra*.
I feel a trembling warmth about thy heart :
It pants.

Sem. As Cowards do before a Battel.
Oh, the Great March is founded.

Ziph. Stay thee one moment,

Ismenes re-enters, with a Bole.

And I will lead thee on. Away, *Ismenes* ;
Watch thou the King's approach, and bring me word. Exit Ism.
Here, see'st thou this, my Love ? look up, *Semandra*,
Thou dying Spark, glimmer a little while ;
Behold this Cordial, this sure warmth at heart,
This faithful Offring of Eternal Love.

Sem. VVhither, oh where ? Death's Myst comes fast upon me.
What is't you drink ?

Ziph. A Draught which makes me thine ;
The pow'rful Cordial which my Father gave me,
A Noble Compound of his fatal skill :
He charg'd me, when I cou'd not live with Honour,
To taste it, and be free.

Sem. Methinks your Voice is faint
As distant Ecchoes ; and I am now far off :
Alas, I know not where.

[Dies.]

Ziph. I'll fold thee thus,
And *Mithridates* shall not part us now :
Fan thus the dying flame with my last breath.
She's out : the damp of Death has quench'd her quite :
These spicy-doors, her lips, are shut, close lock'd,
Which never gale of life shall open more.
I come. Oh Father ! Oh thou true Physician !
Thou work'st me Nobly now ; and oh 'tis welcom !
Thy Drugs are quick ; once more, O Love ! I come,
Thou most of Life in Death. Ambition, Fame :
'Tis empty all ; and nothing but a Name.

[Dies.]

Archelaus, Mithridates *supported bleeding* : Pharnaces,
Pelopidas, Andravar, *bound*.

Arch. Behold, behold my Lord, how I'm rewarded
For faithful service, for the numerous scars
Which in your Cause have mark'd my aged body !
My Daughter's slain. Ha ! let me never rise,
If that the brave *Ziphares* be not kill'd !
Was this the Cordial, wicked Boy, thou brought'st him?

Mith. Blame not the guiltless, for by me he's poyson'd :
By this inhumane Tyrant, Monster, Parricide ;
By me the Drugs were mixt, and dol'd about
To my unhappy Children, left surpriz'd,
They thou'd be born to *Rome* for Royal Slaves.

Arch. Dead ! art thou dead, O lovely Royal Plant,
Blown down by gusty Heav'n, in all thy bloom !
My hour is come ; and thus I follow thee.

Mith. Hold him. What means the frantick General ?
Disarm, and bring him hither. Kneel, O kneel,
Before these Bodies.

Arch. What wou'd you, sacred Sir ?

Mith. Swear, swear to live.
I have a Royal Race of Little Ones :
Live, I Conjure thee, to defend those Infants
From *Roman* Rage ; intreat Victorious *Pompey*,
And he'll be gentle to 'em : Swear to live.

Arch. I swear ; but after that——

Mith. Rise, and no more.

My blood leaks fast ; and the great heavy lading,
My Soul will quickly sink ; therefore revenge :
Yes, you pale figures, you most precious forms,
Who, where you walk, for sure you tread the Stars,
Shame brightest Gods, and add new light to Heav'n,
First, in most dreadful manner, will I give
Those Traytors lives, who drew me to your ruine.
Hence, burn the Slaves ; the curs'd *Pelopidas*,
And Villain *Andravar* : away with 'em.
For thee—(but sure I shall disdain to name thee)
The Palace yet is ours.

Arch. But cannot long
Be so : *Pompey* the Great is entred ;
And those who took your part, are all revolted.
Mith. Away then ; bear him to the middle Turret,
Whose Brazen-head rises above the rest,
In sight of *Pompey*, throw him from the top,
And give his most aspiring life an end.

Phar. I know thou canst not long out-live me, Tyrant.
Accurs'd be Fortune, which too forward bore me
To be thy Prey ; and rot the hand that seiz'd me :
Yet, when my Ghost is from this body dash'd,
If such a Goblin as a Ghost there be,
I'll rise, and wing the mid-way Air to wait thee ;
Hurl'd shalt thou be, as *Saturn* was by *Jove*,
And flag beneath me, while I reign above.

Mith. O General, behold, and wonder with me,
How swiftly Fate can make, ' or unmake Kings !
How empty is Death's Pomp, compar'd with Life !
Where now are all the busie Officers,
The supple Courtiers, and big Men of War,
That buſtled here, and made a little World ?
Revolted all : Support me, for I go.
My Soul is on the Beach, and strait must lanch
Into th' Abyss of the black Sea of death,
Where Furies stand upon the smoaky Rocks,
Prepar'd to meet one greater than themselves.
Here, lay me bleeding by these murder'd Lovers ;
And, oh ! when I am dead, let Sorrow stalk
In sacred silence to my gaping Tomb.
Forget that ever *Mithridates* was ;
No tongue relate the deeds this Hand has done ;
Let thought be still, or work beneath the ground !
But oh he's come, cold Tyrant I obey,
And hug thy Dart that bears my Life away. [Dies.]

F I N I S.

Epilogue, by Mr. Dryden.

YO've seen a Pair of faithful Lovers die :
And much you care ; for, most of you will cry, }
Twas a just Judgment on their Constancy.
For, Heav'n be thank'd, we live in such an Age
When no man dies for Love, but on the Stage :
And ev'n those Martyrs are but rare in Plays ;
A curs'd sign how much true Faith decays.
Love is no more a violent desire ;
'Tis a meer Metaphor, a painted Fire.
In all our Sex, the name examin'd well,
Is Pride, to gain ; and Vanity to tell :
In woman, tis of subtil int'rest made,
Curse on the Punk that made it first a Trade !
She first did Wits Prerogative remove,
And made a Fool presume to prate of Love.
Let Honour and Preferment go for Gold ;
But glorious Beauty is not to be sold :
Or, if it be, 'tis at a rate so high,
That nothing but adoring it shou'd buy.
Yet the rich Cullies may their boasting spare ;
They purchase but sophisticated ware.
'Tis Prodigality that buys deceit ;
where both the Giver, and the Taker cheat.
Men but refine on the old Half-Crown way :
And women fight, like Swizzers, for their Pay.

